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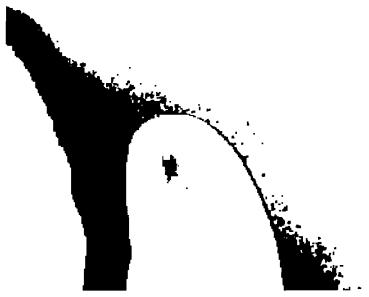
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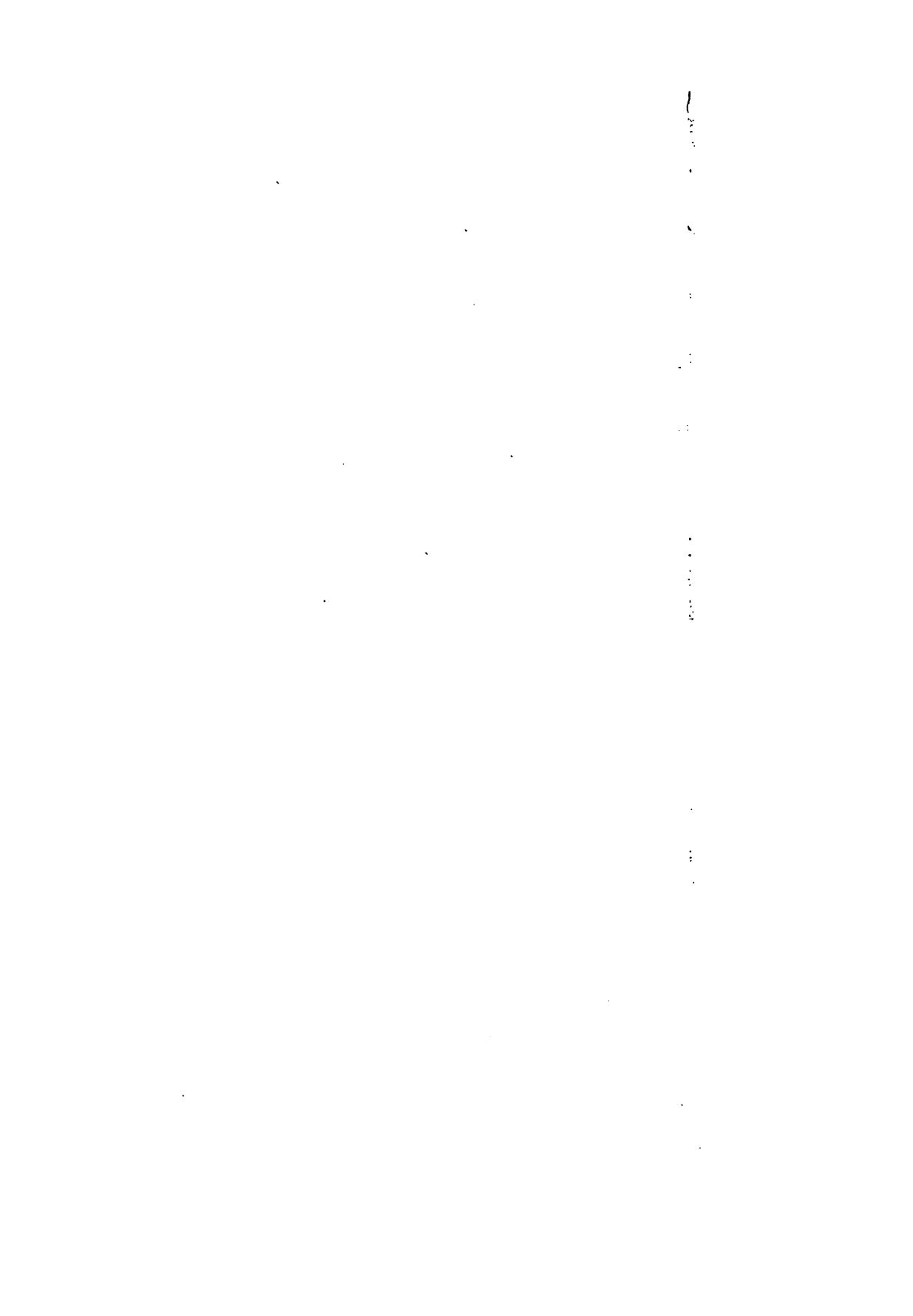
IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

CONTAINING

NINETEEN SERMONS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

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SE R M O N XXV.

OF THE LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.

MATT. xxii. 39.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

THE essential goodness of God, and his special SERM.
nignity toward mankind, are to a considering mind XXV.
divers ways very apparent; the frame of the world,
and the natural course of things, do with a thousand
voices loudly and clearly proclaim them to us; every
sense doth yield us affidavit to that speech of the
holy Psalmist, *The earth is full of the goodness of* Psal. xxxiii.
the Lord: we see it in the glorious brightness of cxxix. 564.
the skies, and in the pleasant verdure of the fields;
we taste it in the various delicacies of food, supplied
by land and sea; we smell it in the fragrances of
herbs and flowers; we hear it in the natural music
of the woods; we feel it in the comfortable warmth
of heaven, and in the cheering freshness of the air;
we continually do possess and enjoy it in the num-
berless accommodations of life, presented to us by
the bountiful hand of nature.

Of the same goodness we may be well assured by
that common providence which continually doth up-
hold us in our being, doth opportunely relieve our
needs, doth protect us in dangers, and rescue us from
imminent mischiefs, doth comport with our infirm-

SERM. ities and misdemeanours ; the which, in the divine
 XXV. Psalmist's style, *doth hold our soul in life, and suf-*
Psal. lxvi. 9.
lvi. 13. ciii.
4. cxlv. 16. *fereth not our feet to be moved; doth redeem our*
life from destruction; doth crown us with loving-
kindness, and tender mercies.

The dispensations of grace, in the revelation of heavenly truth, in the overtures of mercy, in the succours of our weakness, in the proposal of glorious rewards, in all the methods and means conduced to our salvation, do afford most admirable proofs and pledges of the same immense benignity.

But in nothing is the divine goodness toward us more illustriously conspicuous, than in the nature and tendency of those laws which God hath been pleased, for the regulation of our lives, to prescribe unto us, all which do palpably evidence his serious desire and provident care of our welfare ; so that, in imposing them, he plainly doth not so much exercise his sovereignty over us, as express his kindness toward us ; neither do they more clearly declare his will, than demonstrate his good-will to us.

And among all divine precepts this especially, contained in my text, doth argue the wonderful goodness of our heavenly Lawgiver, appearing both in the manner of the proposal, and in the substance of it.

Luke x. 27. *The second, saith our Lord, is like to it; that is,* to the precept of *loving the Lord our God with all our heart:* and is not this a mighty argument of immense goodness in God, that he doth in such a manner commend this duty to us, coupling it with our main duty toward him, and requiring us with like earnestness to love our neighbour as to love himself?

He is transcendently amiable for the excellency of

his nature ; he, by innumerable and inestimable benefits graciously conferred on us, hath deserved our utmost affection ; so that naturally there can be no obligation bearing any proportion or considerable semblance to that of loving him : yet hath he in goodness been pleased to create one, and to endue it with that privilege ; making the love of a man (whom we cannot value but for *his* gifts, to whom we can owe nothing but what properly we owe to *him*) no less obligatory, to declare it near as acceptable as the love of himself, to whom we owe all. To him, as the sole author and free donor of all our good, by just correspondence, all our mind and heart, all our strength and endeavour, are due : and reasonably might he engross them to himself, excluding all other beings from any share in them ; so that we might be obliged only to fix our thoughts and set our affections on him, only to act directly for his honour and interest ; saying with the holy Psalmist, *Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee* : yet doth he freely please to impart a share of these performances on mankind ; yet doth he charge us to place our affection on one another ; to place it there, indeed, in a measure so large, that we can hardly imagine a greater ; according to a rule, than which none can be devised more complete or certain.

O marvellous condescension, O goodness truly divine, which surpasseth the nature of things, which dispenseth with the highest right, and foregoeth the greatest interest that can be ! Doth not God in a sort debase himself, that he might advance us ? Doth he not appear to wave his own due, and neglect his own honour for our advantage ? How otherwise could the

Psal. lxxiii.
25.

SERM. love of man be capable of any resemblance to the
XXV. love of God, and not stand at an infinite distance, or
in an extreme disparity from it? How otherwise
could we be obliged to affect or regard any thing
beside the sovereign, the only goodness? How other-

^{Matt. xix.} wise could there be any *second* or like to *that first*,

^{17.} ^{Matt. xxii.} *that great*, that peerless command, *Thou shalt love*

^{38.} *the Lord thy God with all thy heart?*

This indeed is the highest commendation whereof
any law is capable: for as to be like God is the high-
est praise that can be given to a person; so to re-
semble the divinest law of love to God is the fairest
character that can be assigned of a law: the which
indeed representeth it to be *νόμος βασιλικός*, as St. James

^{Jam. ii. 8.} calleth it; that is, a *royal* and sovereign law; exalted
above all others, and bearing a sway on them. St.

^{1 Tim. i. 5.} Paul telleth us, that *the end of the commandment*
^{Rom. xiii. 8, 9.} (or, the main scope of the evangelical doctrine) is
charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience,
and faith unfeigned; that charity *is the sum* and

^{Gal. v. 14.} substance of all other duties, and that *he that loveth*
^{1 Cor. xiii. 13.} *another hath fulfilled the whole law*; that charity
^{Gal. v. 22.} ^{Col. iii. 14.} is the chief of the theological virtues, and *the prime*
^{1 Cor. xvi. 14.} *fruit of the divine Spirit*; and *the bond of perfec-*
tion, which combineth and consummateth all other
graces, and the general principle of all our doings.

St. Peter enjoineth us that to all other virtues we

^{2 Pet. i. 7.} *add charity*, as the top and crown of them; and,

^{1 Pet. iv. 8.} *Above all things*, saith he, *have fervent charity*
among yourselves. St. John calleth this law, in way

^{1 John iii. 23. 11. iv. 21.} *of excellence, the commandment of God*: and our

^{John xv. 12. 34.} Lord himself claimeth it as his peculiar precept,
This, saith he, is my commandment, that ye love one
another, as I have loved you: A new command-

ment I give unto you, that ye love one another: and SERM.
maketh the observance of it the special cognizance XXV.
of his followers, **By this shall all men know that ye John xiii.**
are my disciples, if ye love one another. ^{35.}

These indeed are lofty commendations thereof, yet all of them may worthily veil to this; all of them seem verified in virtue of this, because God hath vouchsafed to place this command in so near adjacency to the first great law, conjoining the two tables; making charity contiguous, and, as it were, commensurate to piety.

It is true, that in many respects charity doth resemble piety; for it is the most genuine daughter of piety, thence in complexion, in features, in humour much favouring its sweet mother: it doth consist in like dispositions and motions of soul: it doth grow from the same roots and principles of benignity, ingenuity, equity, gratitude, planted in our original constitution by the breath of God, and improved in our hearts by the divine *Spirit of love*; it produceth ^{1 John iv.} the like fruits of beneficence toward others, and of ^{7, 11.} Matt. v. 45. comfort in ourselves; it in like manner doth assimilate us to God, rendering us conformable to his nature, followers of his practice, and partakers of his felicity: it is of like use and consequence toward the regulation of our practice, and due management of our whole life: in such respects, I say, this law is like to the other; but it is however chiefly so for that God hath pleased to lay so great stress thereon, as to make it the other half of our religion and duty; or because, as St. John saith, **This commandment Matt. xxii.** **have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his ^{40.} 1 John iv.** brother also; which is to his praise a most pregnant ^{21.} demonstration of his immense goodness toward us.

SERM. But no less in the very substance of this duty will
XXV. the benignity of him that prescribeth it shine forth,
displaying itself in the rare beauty and sweetness of
it; together with the vast benefit and utility, which
it, being observed, will yield to mankind; which will
appear by what we may discourse for pressing its ob-
servance. But first let us explain it, as it lieth be-
fore us expressed in the words of the text, wherein
we shall consider two particulars observable: first,
the object of the duty; secondly, the qualification
annexed to it: the object of it, *our neighbour*; the
qualification, *as ourselves*.

I. The object of charity is *our neighbour*; that
is, (it being understood, as the precept now concern-
eth us, according to our Lord's exposition, or accord-
ing to his intent and the tenor of his doctrine,) every
man, with whom we have to do, or who is capable of
our love, especially every Christian.

The Law, as it was given to God's ancient people,
did openly regard only those among them who were
linked together in a holy neighbourhood or society,
from which all other men being excluded were deem-
Eph. ii. 12. ed strangers and foreigners; (*aliens*, as St. Paul
speaketh, *from the commonwealth of Israel, and*
strangers from the covenants of promise.) For thus

Levit. xix. the Law runneth in Leviticus, *Thou shalt not bear*
18. *any grudge against the children of thy people, but*
thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; where
plainly *Jews* and *neighbours* are terms equivalent;

Levit. xx. other men being supposed to stand at distance with-
26, 24. *Exod.* out the fold or politic enclosure, which God by sev-
xxxiii. 16. *Deut. vii. 6.* eral ordinances had fenced, to keep that nation unmixed
xiv. 2. and separate: nor can it be excepted against this
Levit. xix. notion, that in the same chapter it is enjoined, *But*
34

the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for by that stranger (as the Jewish masters will interpret it) is meant *a proselyte of righteousness*; or one who, although a stranger by birth, was yet a brother in religion, having voluntarily submitted to their law, being engaged in the same covenant, and thence admitted to the same privileges, as an adopted child of that holy family.

But now, such distinctions of men being voided, <sup>Eph. ii. 14.
Gal. iii. 28.
Acts x. 36.</sup> and that *wall of partition* demolished, all the world is become one people; subject to the laws of one common Lord; and capable of the mercies purchased by one Redeemer. God's love to mankind did move <sup>Tit. iii. 4.
John iii. 16.</sup> him to send our Lord into the world, to assume ^{1 Tim. ii. 5.} human nature, and therein to become a mediator between God and men. Our Lord's kindness to all his brethren disposed him to undertake their salvation, and to expiate their sins, and *to taste death for every man*; the effect whereof is an universal reconciliation of God to the world, and an union of men <sup>1 John ii. 2.
Heb. ii. 9.
2 Cor. v. 19.
Col. i. 20.
Eph. i. 10.
ii. 13.</sup> together.

Now the blood of Christ hath cemented mankind; the favour of God embracing all hath approximated and combined all together; so that now every man is our brother, not only by nature, as derived from the same stock, but by grace, as partaker of the common redemption; now God *desiring the salvation of all men*, and inviting all men to mercy, our duty must be coextended with God's grace, and our charity must follow that of our Saviour.

We are therefore now to all men, that which one Jew was to another; yea more than such, our Christianity having induced much higher obligations,

SERM. stricter alliances, and stronger endearments, than
XXV. were those, whereby Judaism did engage its followers to mutual amity. The duties of common humanity (to which our natural frame and sense do incline us, which philosophy recommendeth and natural religion doth prescribe, being grounded upon our community of nature and cognation of blood, upon apparent equity, upon general convenience and utility) our religion doth not only enforce and confirm; but enhance and improve; superadding higher instances and faster ties of spiritual relation, reaching in a sort to all men, (as being in duty, in design, in remote capacity our spiritual brethren;) but in especial manner to all Christians, who actually are fellow members of the same holy fraternity, contracted by spiritual regeneration from one heavenly seed, supported by a common faith and hope,

¹ Pet. i. 23. strengthened by communion in acts of devotion and charity.
ii. 17.

Hereon therefore are grounded those evangelical commands, explicatory of this law as it now stands Gal. vi. 10. eth in force; that *as we have opportunity we should do good unto all men, especially unto them who are*

¹ Thess. iii. of the household of faith; that we should abound

^{12.}

² Cor. ix. in love one towards another, and towards all men;

^{13.} ^{13.}

that we should glorify God in our professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ, by liberally distributing to the saints, and to all men; that we

Heb. xii. 24. should follow peace with all men, should be patient

¹ Thes. v. 14.

Tit. iii. 2. toward all men; and gentle toward all men, and

¹ Thes. v. 15.

shew all meekness toward all men; and ever follow that which is good both among ourselves, and to all

² Tim. ii. 24.

men; that we should make supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings for all men, especially for

¹ Tim. ii. 1.

Eph. vi. 18.

*all saints, or all our fellow Christians; and express SERM.
moderation, or ingenuity, to all men.*

XXV.

Such is the object of our charity; and thus did our Lord himself expound it, when by a Jewish lawyer being put to resolve this question, *And who is my neighbour?* he did propound a case, or history, whereby he did extort from that Rabbi this confession, that even a Samaritan, discharging a notable office of humanity and mercy to a Jew, did thereby most truly approve himself a good neighbour to him; and consequently that reciprocal performances of such offices were due from a Jew to a Samaritan; whence it might appear, that this relation of neighbourhood is universal and unlimited. So much for the object.

II. As for the qualification annexed and couched in those words, *as thyself*; that, as I conceive, may import both a rule declaring the nature, and a measure determining the quantity, of that love which is due from us to our neighbour; the comparative term *as* implying both conformity or similitude, and com- mensuration or equality.

1. Loving our neighbour *as ourselves* doth import a rule, directing what kind of love we should bear and exercise toward him; or informing us that our charity doth consist in having the same affections of soul, and in performing the same acts of beneficence toward him, as we are ready by inclination, as we are wont in practice to have or to perform toward ourselves, with full approbation of our judgment and conscience, apprehending it just and reasonable so to do.

We cannot indeed better understand the nature of this duty, than by reflecting on the motions of our

<sup>* Phil. iv. 5.
Luke x. 29.</sup>

<sup>πλεον οι
άθρησαν οι</sup>

<sup>δι, αλλα ιε-
ρίον η το δ-</sup>

<sup>μασταθίς
και λογικόν</sup>

^{ζών, &c.}

^{Just. Mart.}

^{contr.}

^{Tryph. p.}

^{320.}

^{Arist. Eth.}

^{ix. 4.}

<sup>η ισηβαλλ-
της φύλαξ εγ-
ηρος λαυρού
δημοντας.</sup>

^{Arist. Eth.}

SERM. own heart, and observing the course of our demean-
XXV. our toward ourselves; for thence infallibly we may
be assured how we should stand affected, and how
we should behave ourselves toward others.

This is a peculiar advantage of this rule, (inferring the excellent wisdom and goodness of him who framed it,) that by it very easily and certainly we may discern all the specialties of our duty, without looking abroad or having recourse to external instructions; so that by it we may be perfect lawgivers, and skilful judges, and faithful monitors to ourselves of what in any case we should do: for every one by internal experience knoweth what it is to love himself, every

one is conscious how he useth to treat himself; each one consequently can prescribe and decide for himself, what he ought to do toward his neighbour: so

¹ Thess. iv. that we are not only *θεοδιδάκτοι*, *taught of God*, as
^{9.} Matt. vii. the apostle saith, *to love one another*; but *αὐτοδιδακ-*
^{12.} *των αὐτοῦ*, *to be taught of himself*. — *ταπεινός* is the best transla-

Luke vi. 31. τοι, taught of ourselves how to exercise that duty :
ο μακεῖς, whence our Lord otherwhere doth propose the law
της. Tob. iv. of charity in these terms, *Whatsoever ye would that*
15.

^{15.}
Const.
Apost. i. 1. *men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them,*
for this is the law and the prophets; that is, unto
this rule all the special precepts of charity proposed
in holy scripture may be reduced.

Wherefore for information concerning our duty in each case and circumstance, we need only thus to consult and interrogate ourselves, hence forming resolutions concerning our practice.

Do we not much esteem and set by ourselves? Do we not strive to maintain in our minds a good opinion of ourselves? Can any mischances befalling us, any defects observable in us, any faults committed by us, induce us to slight or despise ourselves?

—This may teach us what regard and value we SERM.
should ever preserve for our neighbour.

XXV.

Do we not sincerely and earnestly desire our own welfare and advantage in every kind ? Do we not heartily wish good success to our own designs and undertakings ? Are we unconcerned or coldly affected in any case touching our own safety, our estate, our credit, our satisfaction or pleasure ? Do we not especially, if we rightly understand ourselves, desire the health and happiness of our souls ?—This doth inform us, what we should wish and covet for our neighbour.

O τὸν πλεονέκτην ἀπόδειγμόν, οὐτε τοῦ πλεονεκτήματος, &c. Just Mart. contr. 321.

Have we not a sensible delight and complacency in our own prosperity ? (Do we ever repine at any advantages accruing to our person or condition ?) Are we not extremely glad to find ourselves thriving and flourishing in wealth, in reputation, in any accommodation or ornament of our state ? Especially if we be sober and wise, doth not our spiritual proficiency and improvement in virtue yield joyous satisfaction to us ? Are we not much comforted in apprehending ourselves to proceed in a hopeful way toward everlasting felicity ?—This may instruct us what content we should feel in our neighbour's prosperity, both temporal and spiritual.

Do we not seriously grieve at our own disasters and disappointments ? Are we not in sad dumps, whenever we incur any damage or disgrace ? Do not our diseases and pains sorely afflict us ? Do we not pity and bemoan ourselves in any want, calamity, or distress ? Can we especially, if we are ourselves, without grievous displeasure apprehend ourselves enslaved to sin and Satan, destitute of God's favour, exposed to endless misery ?—Hence

SERM. may we learn how we should condole and commiserate the misfortunes of our neighbour.

Do we not eagerly prosecute our own concerns ? Do we not with huge vigour and industry strive to acquire all conveniences and comforts to ourselves, to rid ourselves of all wants and molestations ? Is our solicitous care or painful endeavour ever wanting toward the support and succour of ourselves in any of our needs ? Are we satisfied in merely wishing ourselves well ? are we not also busy and active in procuring what we affect ? Especially, if we are well advised, do we not effectually provide for the weal of our soul, and supply of our spiritual necessities ; labouring to rescue ourselves from ignorance and error, from the tyranny of sin, from the torture of a bad conscience, from the danger of hell ?—This sheweth how ready we should be really to further our neighbour's good, ministering to him all kinds of assistance and relief suitable to his needs, both corporal and spiritual.

Are we so proud or nice, that we disdain to yield attendance or service needful for our own sustenance or convenience ? do we not indeed gladly perform the meanest and most sordid offices for ourselves ?—This declareth how condescensive we should be in helping our neighbour, how ready even to *wash his feet*, when occasion doth require.

Do we love to vex ourselves, or cross our own humour ? do we not rather seek by all means to please and gratify ourselves ?—This may warn us how innocent and inoffensive, how compliant and complacent we should be in our behaviour toward others ; endeavouring to *please them in all things*, especially for their good to edification.

Are we easily angry with ourselves, do we retain SERM.
implacable grudges against ourselves, or do we execute upon ourselves mischievous revenge? are we not rather very meek and patient toward ourselves, mildly comporting with our own great weaknesses, our troublesome humours, our impertinences and follies; readily forgiving ourselves the most heinous offences, neglects, affronts, injuries, and outrages committed by us against our own interest, honour, and welfare?—Hence may we derive lessons of meekness and patience, to be exercised toward our neighbour, in bearing his infirmities and miscarriages, in remitting any wrongs or discourtesies received from him.

Are we apt to be rude in our deportment, harsh, in our language, or rigorous in our dealing toward ourselves? do we not rather in word and deed treat ourselves very softly, very indulgently? Do we use to pry for faults, or to pick quarrels with ourselves, to carp at any thing said or done by us, rashly or upon slight grounds to charge blame on ourselves, to lay heavy censures on our actions, to make foul constructions of our words, to blazon our defects, or aggravate our failings? do we not rather connive at and conceal our blemishes? do we not excuse and extenuate our own crimes?

Can we find in our hearts to frame virulent invectives, or to dart bitter taunts and scoffs against ourselves; to murder our own credit by slander, to blast it by detraction, to maim it by reproach, to prostitute it to be deflowered by jeering and scurilous abuse? are we not rather very jealous of our reputation, and studious to preserve it, as a precious

SERM. ornament, a main fence, an useful instrument of our
XXV. welfare ?

Do we delight to report, or like to hear ill stories of ourselves ? do we not rather endeavour all we can to stifle them ; to tie the tongues and stop the ears of men against them ?—Hence may we be acquainted how civil and courteous in our behaviour, how fair and ingenuous in our dealing, how candid and mild in our judgment or censure, we should be toward our neighbour ; how very tender and careful we should be of anywise wronging or hurting his fame.

Thus reflecting on ourselves, and making our practice toward ourselves the pattern of our dealing with others, we shall not fail to discharge what is prescribed to us in this law : and so we have here a rule of charity. But further,

2. Loving our neighbour as ourselves doth also import the measure of our love toward him ; that it should be commensurate and equal in degree to that love which we bear and exercise toward ourselves.

1. Pet. i. 22. St. Peter once and again doth exhort us to love one another ἐκτενῶς, with an outstretched affection : and iv. 8.

| St. Peter once and again doth exhort us to love one another ἐκτενῶς, with an outstretched affection : and how far that affection should be stretched we are here informed ; even that it should reach the furthest that can be, or to a parity with that intense love, which we do bear in heart, and express in performance toward ourselves : so that we do either bring down our self-love to such a moderation, or raise up our charity to such a fervency, that both come to be adjusted in the same even level. This is that pitch, at which we should aim and aspire ; this is that perfection of charity, which our Lord re-

commendeth to us in that injunction, *Be perfect, SERM.
even as your Father in heaven is perfect.* XXV.

That this sense of the words is included, yea Matt. v. 48. chiefly intended, divers reasons will evince : For,

1. The most natural signification and common use of the phrase doth import thus much ; and any one at first hearing would so understand the words.

2. It appeareth by comparing this precept with that to which it is annexed, *of loving God with all our heart and all our soul*; which manifestly designeth the quantity and degree of that love : consequently the like determination is intended in this precept, which is expressed to resemble that, or designed in like manner to qualify and bound our duty toward our neighbour.

3. If the law doth not signify thus much, it doth hardly signify any thing ; not at least any thing of direction or use to us : for no man is ignorant that he is obliged to love his neighbour, but how far that love must extend is the point wherein most of us do need to be resolved, and without satisfaction in which we shall hardly do any thing : for as he that oweth money will not pay except he can tell how much it is ; so to know the duty will not avail toward effectual observance of it, if its measure be not fixed.

4. Indeed, the law otherwise understood will rather be apt to misguide than to direct us ; inducing us to apprehend, that we shall satisfy its intent, and sufficiently discharge our duty, by practising charity in any low degree or mean instance. Also,

5. The former sense, which is unquestionable, doth infer and establish this ; because similitude of love, morally speaking, cannot consist with inequality

SERM. thereof: for if in considerable degrees we love ourselves more than others, assuredly we shall fail both in exerting such internal acts of affection, and in performing such external offices of kindness toward them, as we do exert and perform in regard to ourselves; whence this law, taken merely as a rule, demanding a confused and imperfect similitude of practice, will have no clear obligation or certain efficacy.

6. But further to assure this exposition, I shall declare that the duty thus interpreted is agreeable to reason, and may justly be required of us upon considerations, which together will serve to press the observance of it according to such measure.

1. It is reasonable that we should thus love our neighbour as ourselves, because he is as ourselves, or really in all considerable respects the same with us: we concur with him in all that is necessary, substantial, and stable; we differ from him only in things contingent, circumstantial, and variable; in the which, of course or by chance we are liable in a small time as much to differ from ourselves: in such respects we are not the same to-day that we were yesterday, and shall be to-morrow; for we shift our circumstances as we do our clothes; our bodies are in continual flux, and our souls do much conform to their alteration; our temper and complexion do vary with our air, our diet, our conversation, our fortunes, our age; our parts grow and decay, our principles and judgments, our affections and desires are never fixed, and seldom rest long in the same place; all our outward state doth easily change face: so that if we consider the same person in youth and in age, in health and in sickness, in

prosperity and in distress, may we not say, *quātus mutatus ab illo*; how quite another man is he SERM. XXV. grown! Yet shall a man for such alterations surcease or abate his love to himself?—Why then in regard to the like differences shall we less affect our neighbour, who is endowed with that common nature, which alone through all those vicissitudes sticketh fast in us; who is the most express image of us, (or rather a copy, drawn by the same hand, of the same original,) another self, attired in a diverse garb of circumstances? Do we not, so far as we despise or disaffect him, by consequence slight or hate ourselves; seeing (except bare personality, or I know not what metaphysical identity) there is nothing in him different from what is, or what may be in us?

2. It is just that we should love our neighbour equally with ourselves, because he really no less deserveth love, or because upon a fair judgment he will appear equally amiable. Justice is impartial, and regardeth things as they are in themselves, abstracting from their relation to this or that person; whence, if our neighbour seem worthy of affection no less than we, it demandeth that accordingly we should love him no less.

And what ground can there be of loving ourselves, which may not as well be found in others? Is it endowments of nature, is it accomplishments of knowledge, is it ornaments of virtue, is it accoutrements of fortune? But is not our neighbour possessed of the same? is he not at least capable of them, the collation and acquist of them depending Cor. iv. 6.
7. on the same arbitrary bounty of God, or upon faculties and means commonly dispensed to all? May

SERM. not any man at least be as wise and as good as
XXV. we?—Why then should we not esteem, why not
affect him as much? Doth relation to us alter the
case? is self as self lovely or valuable? doth that
respect lend any worth or price to things?

Likewise, what more can justice find in our neighbour to obstruct or depress our love than it may observe in ourselves? hath he greater infirmities or defects, is he more liable to errors and miscarriages, is he guilty of worse faults than we? If without arrogance and vanity we cannot affirm this, then are we as unworthy of love as he can be; and refusing any degree thereof to him, we may as reasonably withdraw the same from ourselves.

3. It is fit that we should be obliged to love our neighbour equally with ourselves, because all charity beneath self-love is defective, and all self-love above charity is excessive.

It is an imperfect charity which doth not respect our neighbour according to his utmost merit and worth, which doth not heartily desire his good, which doth not earnestly promote his advantage in every kind, according to our ability and opportunity: and what beyond this can we do for ourselves?

If in kind or degree we transcend this, it is not virtuous love or true friendship to ourselves, but a vain fondness or perverse dotage; proceeding from inordinate dispositions of soul, grounded on foolish conceits, begetting foul qualities and practices; envy, strife, ambition, avarice, and the like.

4. Equity requireth that we should love our neighbour to this degree, because we are apt to claim the same measure of love from others. No mean respect

or slight affection will satisfy us; we cannot brook SERM.
the least disregard or coldness; to love us a little is XXV.
all one to us as not to love us at all: it is therefore
equitable that we should be engaged to the same
height of charity toward others; otherwise we should
be allowed in our dealings to use double weights
and measures, which is plain iniquity: what indeed Prov.xx.10.
can be more ridiculously absurd, than that we should
pretend to receive that from others, which we are
not disposed to yield to them upon the same ground
and title?

5. It is needful that so great a charity should be
prescribed, because none inferior thereto will reach
divers weighty ends designed in this law; namely,
the general convenience and comfort of our lives in
mutual society and intercourse: for if in consider-
able degree we do affect ourselves beyond others,
we shall be continually bickering and clashing with
them about points of interest and credit; scrambling
with them for what may be had, and clambering to
get over them in power and dignity: whence all the
passions annoying our souls, and all the mischiefs
disturbing our lives, must needs ensue.

6. That entire love which we owe to God our
Creator, and to Christ our Redeemer, doth exact
from us no less a measure of charity than this: for
seeing they have so clearly demonstrated themselves
to bear an immense love to men, and have charged
us therein to imitate them; it becometh us, in con-
formity, in duty, in gratitude to them, to bear the
highest we can, that is, the same as we bear to our-
selves: for how can we love God enough, or with
all our soul, if we do not accord with him in loving

SERM. his friends and relations, his servants, his children,
XXV. with most entire affection?

If in God's judgment they are equal to us, if in his affection and care they have an equal share, if he in all his dealings is indifferent and impartial toward all; how can our judgment, our affection, our behaviour be right, if they do not conspire with him in the same measures?

7. Indeed the whole tenor and genius of our religion do imply obligation to this pitch of charity, upon various accounts.

It representeth all worldly goods and matters of private interest as very inconsiderable and unworthy of our affection, thereby subtracting the fuel of immoderate self-love.

It enjoineth us for all our particular concerns entirely to rely upon Providence; so barring solicitude for ourselves, and disposing an equal care for others.

It declareth every man so weak, so vile, so wretched, so guilty of sin and subject to misery, (so for all good wholly indebted to the pure grace and mercy of God,) that no man can have reason to dote on himself, or to prefer himself before others: we need not cark, or prog, or scrape for ourselves, being assured that God sufficiently careth for us.

In its account the fruits and recompenses of love to others in advantage to ourselves do far surpass all present interests and enjoyments: whence in effect the more or less we love others, answerably the more or less we love ourselves; so that charity and self-love become coincident, and both run together evenly in one channel.

Matt. v. 45. It recommendeth to us the imitation of God's love

and bounty; which are absolutely pure, without any SERM.
regard, any capacity of benefit redounding to him—XXV.
self.

It commandeth us heartily to love even our bitterest enemies and most cruel persecutors; which cannot be performed without a proportionable abatement of self-love.

It chargeth us not only freely to impart our sub-^{1 John iii.}
stance, but willingly to expose our lives, for the good
of our brethren: in which case charity doth plainly
match self-love; for what hath a man more dear or
precious than his life to lay out for himself?

It representeth all men (considering their divine extraction, and being formed after God's image; their designation for eternal glory and happiness, their partaking of the common redemption by the undertakings and sufferings of Christ, their being objects of God's tender affection and care) so very considerable, that no regard beneath the highest will befit them.

It also declarereth us so nearly allied to them, and so greatly concerned in their good, (we being *all one* Gal. iii. 28.
in Christ, and members one of another,) that we John xvii.
ought to have a perfect complacency in their welfare, Rom. xii. 5.
and a sympathy in their adversity, as our own. 1 Cor. xii.
John xiii.

It condemneth self-love, self-pleasing, self-seeking, 35.
as great faults; which yet (even in the highest excess) do not seem absolutely bad; or otherwise culpable, than as including partiality, or detracting from 1 Tim. iii. 2.
that equal measure of charity which we owe to others: 2 Pet. ii. 10.
for surely we cannot love ourselves too much, if we Rom. xv. 1.
love others equally with ourselves; we cannot seek Phil. ii. 4.
our own good excessively, if with the same earnestness 1 Cor. x. 24.
we seek the good of others. xiii. 5.

SERM XXV. It exhibiteth supernatural aids of grace, and con-
ferreth that holy spirit of love, which can serve to no
meaner purposes, than to quell that sorry principle
of niggardly selfishness, to which corrupt nature doth
incline; and to enlarge our hearts to this divine ex-
tent of goodness.

8. Lastly, many conspicuous examples, proposed
for our direction in this kind of practice, do imply
this degree of charity to be required of us.

It may be objected to our discourse, that the duty
thus understood is unpracticable, nature violently
swaying to those degrees of self-love which charity
can nowise reach. This exception (would time per-
mit) I should assoil, by shewing how far, and by
what means we may attain to such a practice; (how
at least, by aiming at this top of perfection, we may
ascend nearer and nearer thereto:) in the mean time
experience doth sufficiently evince possibility; and
assuredly that may be done, which we see done be-
fore us. And so it is, pure charity hath been the
root of such affections and such performances (recorded
by indubitable testimony) toward others, which
hardly any man can exceed in regard to himself:
nor indeed hath there scarce ever appeared any hero-
ical virtue or memorable piety, whereof charity over-
bearing selfishness, and sacrificing private interest to
public benefit, hath not been a main ingredient. For
instance then;

Did not Abraham even prefer the good of others
before his own, when he gladly did quit his country,
patrimony, friends, and kindred, to pass his days in a
wandering pilgrimage, upon no other encouragement
than an overture of blessing on his posterity?

Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. xxv. in Eph. Dr. rii. Did not the charity of Moses stretch thus far,

when for the sake of his brethren he voluntarily SERM.
did exchange the splendors and delights of a court XXV.
for a condition of vagrancy and servility; choosing Heb. xi. 24.
*rather, as the apostle speaketh, to suffer affliction
with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin?* did not it overstretch, when (although having been grievously affronted by them) he wished that rather his name should be *expunged from* Exod.
God's book, than that their sin should abide unpar- xxxii. 32. Βαύλωμαι
μητ' ισινει
ἀπολλεθει,
doned?

Did not Samuel exercise such a charity, when being ἡ χαρὰς ισινί-
ναι τούτοις
θεοὶ δύνασι
ingratefully and injuriously dismounted from his au- θεοίς μάγιας.
thority, he did yet retain toward that people a zeal- μανία, ὄντως
Chrys. in
Eph.Or. vii.
ous desire of their welfare, *not ceasing earnestly to
pray for them?*

Did not Jonathan love David equally with himself, 1 Sam. xx.
when for his sake he chose to incur the displeasure ³⁰ 30.
of his father and his king; when for his advantage he was content to forfeit the privilege of his birth, and the inheritance of a crown; when he could without envy or grudge look on the growing prosperity of his supplanter, could heartily wish his safety, could effectually protect it, could purchase it to him with his own great danger and trouble: when he, that in gallantry of courage and virtue did yield to none, was yet willing to become inferior to one born his subject, one raised from the dust, one *taken from* Psal.lxxviii.
a sheepcote; so that unrepiningly and without disdain ⁷⁰ 70.
he could say, *Thou shalt be king over Israel, and* 1 Sam.xxiii.
I shall be next unto thee?—are not these pregnant evidences, that it was truly said in the story, *The* 1 Sam. xviii.
soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, 1. xx. 17.
and he loved him as his own soul?

SERM. Did not the Psalmist competently practise this
XXV. duty, when in the sickness of his ingrateful adver-
Psal. xxxv. ^{12.} *saries he clothed himself with sackcloth, he humbled*
his soul with fasting; he bowed down heavily as
one that mourneth for his mother?

Were not Elias, Jeremy, and other prophets as much concerned for the good of their countrymen as for their own, when they took such pains, when they ran such hazards, when they endured such hardships not only for them, but from them; being requited with hatred and misusage for endeavouring to reclaim them from sin, and stop them from ruin?

May not the holy apostles seem to have loved mankind beyond themselves, when for its instruction and reformation, for reconciling it to God, and procuring its salvation, they gladly did undertake and undergo so many rough difficulties, so many formidable dangers, such irksome pains and troubles, such extreme wants and losses, such grievous ignominies and disgraces; slighting all concerns of their own, and relinquishing whatever was most dear to them (their safety, their liberty, their ease, their estate, their reputation, their pleasure, their very blood and breath) for the welfare of others; even of those who did spitefully malign and cruelly abuse them?

Survey but the life of one among them; mark the wearisome travels he underwent over all the earth, the solicitous cares which did possess his mind *for all the churches*; the continual toils and drudgeries sustained by him in preaching by word and writing, in visiting, in admonishing, in all pastoral employ-

ments; the imprisonments, the stripes, the reproaches, SERM. the oppositions and persecutions of every kind, and XXV. from all sorts of people, which he suffered; the <sup>2 Cor. xi.
23. iv. 8.</sup> pinching wants, the desperate hazards, the lament- <sup>1 Cor. iv.
11.</sup> able distresses with the which he did ever conflict: peruse those black catalogues of his afflictions registered by himself; then tell me how much his charity was inferior to his self-love? did not at least the one vie with the other, when he, for the benefit of his disciples, was content *to be absent* ^{Phil. i. 24.} *from the Lord*, or suspended from a certain fruition of glorious beatitude; resting in this uncomfortable state, in *this fleshly tabernacle* wherein he <sup>2 Cor. v. 1,
&c.</sup> groaned, being burdened, and longing for enlargement? Did he not somewhat beyond himself love those men, for whose salvation he wished himself *accursed from Christ*, or debarred from the as- ^{Rom. ix. 3.} sured enjoyment of eternal felicity; those very <sup>2 Cor. xi.
24, 25.</sup> men by whom he had been stoned, had been <sup>1 Thess. ii.
scourged, had been often beaten to extremity, from
whom he had received manifold indignities and out-
rages?</sup>

Did not they love their neighbours as themselves, ^{Acts iv. 34.} who sold their possessions, and distributed the prices of them for relief of their indigent brethren? Did not most of the ancient saints and fathers mount near the top of this duty, of whom it is by unquestionable records testified, that they did freely bestow all their private estate and substance on the poor, devoting themselves to the service of God and edification of his people? Finally,

Did not our Lord himself in our nature exemplify this duty, yea by his practice far outdo his precept?

SERM. For, he who from the brightest glories, from the immense riches, from the ineffable joys and felicities of his celestial kingdom, did willingly stoop down to assume the garb of a servant, to be clothed with the infirmities of flesh, to become *a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief*: he who for our sake vouchsafed to live in extreme penury and disgrace, to feel hard want, sore travail, bitter persecution, most grievous shame and anguish: he who not only did contentedly bear, but purposely did choose to be accused, to be slandered, to be reviled, to be mocked,

Rom. v. 6. to be tortured, to pour forth his heart-blood upon a 8, 10.
 1 Pet. iii. 18. cross, for the sake of an unprofitable, an unworthy, Eph. ii. 1.
 Col. ii. 13. an impious, an ingrateful generation; for the salvation Chrys. in
 Eph. Or. vii. in 1 Cor. Or. xxxii. of his open enemies, of base apostates, of perverse rebels, of villainous traitors: he who, in the

height of his mortal agonies, did sue for the pardon of his cruel murderers; who did send his apostles to them, did cause so many wonders to be done before them, did furnish all means requisite to convert and save them: he that acted and suffered all this, and more than can be expressed, with perfect frank-

Heb. xii. 2. ness and good-will; did he not signally love his neighbour as himself, to the utmost measure? did not in him virtue conquer nature, and charity triumph over self-love? This he did to seal and impress his doctrine; to shew us what we should do, and what we can do by his grace; to oblige us and to encourage us unto a conformity with him in this

Eph. v. 1. respect; for, *Walk in love*, saith the apostle, *as*
 1 John iii. 16. *Christ hath also loved us, and hath given himself*
 John xv. 12. *for us*; and, *This*, saith he himself, *is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved*

you : and how can I better conclude, than in the re- SERM.
commendation of such an example? XXV.

Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God ^{2 Thess. ii.}
^{16.} *even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given*
us everlasting consolation, and good hope through
grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in
every good word and work.

SERMON XXVI.

OF THE LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.

MATT. xxii. 39.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

SERM. XXVI. I HAVE formerly discoursed on these words, and then shewed how they do import two observable particulars: first a rule of our charity, or that it should be like in nature; then a measure of it, or that it should be equal in degree to the love which we do bear to ourselves. Of this latter interpretation I did assign divers reasons, urging the observance of the precept according to that notion: but one material point, scantiness of time would not allow me to consider; which is the removal of an exception, to which that interpretation is very liable, and which is apt to discourage from a serious application to the practice of this duty so expounded.

If, it may be said, the precept be thus understood, as to oblige us to love our neighbours equally with ourselves, it will prove unpracticable, such a charity being merely romantic and imaginary; for who doth, who can love his neighbour in this degree? Nature powerfully doth resist, common sense plainly doth forbid that we should do so: a natural instinct doth prompt us to love ourselves, and we are forcibly driven thereto by an unavoidable sense of pleasure and pain, resulting from the constitution of our

body and soul, so that our own least good or evil SERM.
are very sensible to us : whereas we have no such XXVI.
potent inclination to love others ; we have no sense,
or a very faint one, of what another doth enjoy or
endure : doth not therefore nature plainly suggest,
that our neighbour's good cannot be so considerable
to us as our own ? especially when charity doth
clash with self-love, or when there is a competition
between our neighbour's interest and our own, is it
possible that we should not be partial to our own
side ? is not therefore this precept such as if we
should be commanded to fly, or to do that which
natural propension will certainly hinder ?

In answer to this exception I say, first,

1. Be it so, that we can never attain to love our
neighbour altogether so much as ourselves, yet may
it be reasonable that we should be enjoined to do
so ; for

Laws must not be depressed to our imperfection,
nor rules bent to our obliquity : but we must ascend
toward the perfection of them, and strive to con-
form our practice to their exactness. If what is
prescribed be according to the reason of things just
and fit, it is enough, although our practice will not
reach it ; for what remaineth may be supplied by re-
pentance and humility in him that should obey, by
mercy and pardon in him that doth command.

In the prescription of duty it is just, that what
may be required, even in rigour, should be precisely
determined, though in execution of justice or dis-
pensation of recompense consideration may be had
of our weakness ; whereby both the authority of our
governor may be maintained, and his clemency glo-
rified.

SERM. It is of great use, that by comparing the Law
XXVI. with our practice, and in the perfection of the one discerning the defect of the other, we may be humbled, may be sensible of our impotency, may thence be forced to seek the helps of grace, and the benefit of mercy.

Were the rule never so low, our practice would come beneath it ; it is therefore expedient that it should be high, that at least we may rise higher in performance than otherwise we should do : for the higher we aim, the nearer we shall go to the due pitch ; as he that aimeth at heaven, although he cannot reach it, will yet shoot higher than he that aimeth only at the housetop.

The height of duty doth prevent sloth and decay in virtue, keeping us in wholesome exercise and Phil. iii. 12. in continual improvement, while we be always climbing toward the top, and straining unto further attainment : the sincere prosecution of which course, as it will be more profitable unto us, so it will be no less acceptable to God, than if we could thoroughly fulfil the law ; for in judgment God will only reckon upon the sincerity and earnestness of our endeavour : so that if we have done our best, it will be taken as 1 Cor. v. 28. if we had done all. *Our labour will not be lost in the Lord* ; for the degrees of performance will be 1 Thess. i. 13. considered, and he that hath done his duty in part shall be proportionably recompensed ; according to 1 Cor. iii. 8. that of St. Paul, *Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own work.* Hence some-

Matt. v. 48. times we are enjoined to *be perfect as our heavenly xix. 21.* 1 Pet. i. 16. *Father is perfect, and to be holy as God is holy ; Col. iv. 12.* otherwhile to *go on to perfection, and to press to-Heb. vi. 1.* Philipp. iii. 14. *ward the mark ;* which precepts in effect do import

the same thing ; but the latter implieth the former, SERM. although in attainment impossible, yet in attempt XXVI. very profitable : and surely he is likely to write best, who proposeth to himself the fairest copy for his imitation.

In fine, if we do act what is possible, or as we can do conform to the rule of duty, we may be sure that no impossibility of this, or of any other sublime law, can prejudice us.

I say, of any other law ; for it is not only this law to which this exception may be made, but many others, perhaps every one evangelical law, are alike repugnant to corrupt nature, and seem to surmount our ability.

But neither is the performance of this task so impossible, or so desperately hard, (if we take the right course, and use proper means toward it,) as is supposed : as may somewhat appear, if we will weigh the following considerations.

1. Be it considered, that we may be mistaken in our account, when we do look on the impossibility or difficulty of such a practice, as it appeareth at present, before we have seriously attempted, and in a good method, by due means, earnestly laboured to achieve it : for many things cannot be done at first, or with a small practice, which by degrees and a continued endeavour may be effected ; divers things are placed at a distance, so that without passing through the interjacent way we cannot arrive at them ; divers things seem hard before trial, which afterward prove very easy : it is impossible to fly up to the top of a steeple, but we may ascend thither by steps ; we cannot get to Rome without crossing the seas, and travelling through France or Germany ;

SERM. XXVI. it is hard to comprehend a subtile theorem in geometry, if we pitch on it first; but if we begin at the simple principles, and go forward through the intermediate propositions, we may easily attain a demonstration of it: it is hard to swim, to dance, to play on an instrument; but a little trial or a competent exercise will render those things easy to us: so may the practice of this duty seem impossible, or insuperably difficult, before we have employed divers means, and voided divers impediments; before we have inured our minds and affections to it; before we have tried our forces in some instances thereof, previous to others of a higher strain, and nearer the perfection of it.

If we would set ourselves to exercise charity in those instances, whereof we are at first capable without much reluctance, and thence proceed toward others of a higher nature, we may find such improvement, and taste such content therein, that we may soon arise to incredible degrees thereof; and at length perhaps we may attain to such a pitch, that it will seem to us base and vain to consider our own good before that of others, in any sensible measure; and that nature which now so mightily doth contest in favour of ourselves, may in time give way to a better nature, born of custom, affecting the good of others. Let not therefore a present sense or experience raise in our minds a prejudice against the possibility or practicableness of this duty.

2. Let us consider, that in some respects, and in divers instances it is very feasible to love our neighbour no less than ourselves.

We may love our neighbour truly and sincerely,
¹ Tim. i. 6. *out of a pure heart and a good conscience, and*

faith unfeigned, as St. Paul doth prescribe; or, according to St. Peter's injunction, *from a pure heart love one another fervently*: and in this respect we can do no more toward ourselves; for truth admitteth no degrees, sincerity is a pure and complete thing, exclusive of all mixture or alloy.

And as to external acts at least it is plain that charity toward others may reach self-love; for we may be as serious, as vigorous, as industrious in acting for our neighbour's good, as we can be in pursuing our own designs and interests: for reason easily can manage and govern external practice; and common experience sheweth the matter to this extent practicable, seeing that often men do employ as much diligence on the concerns of others, as they can do on their own, (being able to do no more than their best in either case:) wherefore in this respect charity may vie with selfishness; and practising thus far may be a step to mount higher.

Also rational consideration will enable us to perform some interior acts of charity in the highest degree; for if we do but (as without much difficulty we may do) apply our mind to weigh the qualities and the actions of our neighbour, we may thence obtain a true opinion and just esteem of him; and, secluding gross folly or flattery of ourselves, how can we in that respect or instance be more kind or benign to ourselves?

Is it not also within the compass of our ability to repress those passions of soul, the eruption whereof tendeth to the wrong, damage, and offence of our neighbour; in regard to which practice St. Paul affirmeth, that the law may be fulfilled: *Love*, saith he, *worketh no evil to his neighbour; therefore*

SERM. *love is the fulfilling of the law?* And what more
XXVI. in this respect can we perform for ourselves?

3. We may consider, that commonly we see men inclined by other principles to act as much or more for the sake of others, as they would for themselves.

Moral honesty hath inclined some, ambition and popularity have excited others, to encounter the greatest dangers, to attack the greatest difficulties, to expose their safety, to sacrifice their lives for the welfare of their country^a.

Common friendship hath often done as much, and

*Insana
amicitia.*
Sen. Ep. ix. it)

commonly doeth far more: for what will not a fond lover undertake and achieve for his minion, although she really be the worst enemy he can have?

*Chrys. in
Eph. p. 797.*

yet for such a snake will he not lavish his estate, prostitute his honour, abandon his ease, hazard his safety, shipwreck his conscience, forfeit his salvation? What may not a Delilah obtain of her Samson, a Cleopatra of her Anthony, how prejudicial soever it be to his own interest and welfare?

Why then may not a principle of charity, grounded on so much better reason, and backed by so much stronger motives, be conceived able to engage men to the like practice? why may not a man be disposed to do that out of a hearty good-will, which he can do out of vain conceit or vicious appetite? why shall other forces overbear nature, and the power of charity be unable to match it?

4. Let us consider, that those dispositions of soul which usually with so much violence do thwart the observance of this precept, are not ingredients of

^a Αληθὲς δὲ τὸ περὶ τοῦ σπουδαίου, καὶ τὸ τῶν φίλων ἔνεκα πολλὰ πράττειν καὶ τῆς πατρίδος, καὶ δέη ὑπεραποθνήσκειν. Arist. Eth. ix. 8.

true self-love, by the which we are directed to re- SERM.
gulate our charity; but a spurious brood of our folly XXVI.
and pravity, which imply not a sober love of our-
selves, but a corrupt fondness toward an idol of our
fancy mistaken for ourselves.

A high conceit of our worth or ability, of our for-
tune or worldly state, of our works and achieve-
ments; a great complacence or confidence in some
endowment or advantage belonging to us, a stiff ad-
herence to our own will or humour, a greedy appe-
tite to some particular interest or base pleasure;
these are those, not attendants of natural self-love,
but issues of unnatural depravedness in judgment
and affections, which render our practice so exor-
bitant in this regard, making us seem to love our-
selves so immoderately, so infinitely; so contracting
our souls, and drawing them inwards, that we ap-
pear indisposed to love our neighbour in any consi-
derable degree: if these (as by serious considera-
tion they may be) were avoided, or much abated, it would
not be found so grievous a matter to love our neigh-
bour as ourselves; for that sober love remaining be-
hind, to which nature inclineth, and which reason
approveth, would rather help to promote than yield
any obstacle to our charity: if such perverse selfish-
ness were checked and depressed, and natural kind-
ness cherished and advanced, then true self-love and
charity would compose themselves into near a just
poise.

5. Indeed (which we may further consider) our
nature is not so absolutely averse or indisposed to
the practice of such charity, as to those may seem
who view it slightly, either in some particular in-
stances, or in ordinary practice: nature hath fur-

SERM. nished us with strong instincts for the defence and
XXVI. sustenance of our life; and common practice is de-
praved by ill education and custom: these some
men poring on do imagine no room left for charity
in the constitution of men; but they consider not
that one of these may be so moderated, and the
other so corrected, that charity may have a fair
scope in men's hearts and practice; and they slip
over divers pregnant marks of our natural inclina-
tion thereto.

Man having received his soul from the breath of
God, and being framed after the image of his most
benign parent, there do yet abide in him some fea-
tures resembling God, and relics of the divine ori-
ginal; there are in us seeds of ingenuity, of equity, of
pity, of benignity, which being cultivated by sober
consideration and good use, under the conduct and
aid of heavenly grace, will produce noble fruits of
charity.

The frame of our nature so far disposeth us
thereto, that our bowels are touched with sensible
pain upon the view of any calamitous object: our
fancy is disturbed at the report of any disaster be-
falling any person; we can hardly see or read a
tragedy without motions of compassion.

The practice of benignity, of courtesy, of clemency
at first sight, without any discursive reflection, doth
obtain approbation and applause from us; being no
less grateful and amiable to the mind than beauty to
our eyes, harmony to our ears, fragrancy to our
smell, and sweetness to our palate: and to the same
mental sense malignity, cruelty, harshness, all kinds
of uncharitable dealing are very disgusting and
loathsome.



There wanteth not any commendation to procure SERM.
a respect for charity, nor any invective to breed ab- XXVI.
horrence of uncharitableness; nature sufficiently ^{θεῖα τοῦς}
prompting to favour the one, and to detest the ^{φιλανθρώ-}
^{πους ἵστανται}
^{μιν.} Arist.
Eth. viii. 1.

The practice of the former in common language hath ever been styled humanity; and the disposition from whence it floweth is called good-nature: the practice of the latter is likewise termed inhumanity, and its source ill-nature; as thwarting the common notions and inclinations of mankind, divesting us of our manhood, and rendering us a sort of monsters among men.

No quality hath a clearer repute, or is commonly more admired, than generosity, which is a kind of natural charity, or hath a great spice thereof: no disposition is more despised among men than niggardly selfishness; whence commonly men are ashamed to avow self-interest as a principle of their actions, (rather fathering them on some other cause,) as being conscious to themselves that it is the basest of all principles^b.

Whatever the censurers and detractors of human nature do pretend, yet even themselves do admire pure beneficence, and contemn selfishness; for, if we look to the bottom of their intent, it is hence they are bent to slander mankind as void of good nature, because out of malignity they would not allow it a quality so excellent and divine.

Wherefore, according to the general judgment and

^b Επιτιμᾶσι γὰρ τοῖς ἑαυτοῖς μάλιστα ἀγαπᾶσι, καὶ ὡς ἐν αἰσχρῷ φιλαίτερος ἀπεκαλοῦσι. Arist. ix. 8.

"Οὐφε δὲ βελτίων γέ, μᾶλλον διὰ τὸ καλὸν, καὶ φίλου ἔνεκα, τὸ δὲ αὐτοῦ ταρίχει. Ibid.

SERM. conscience of men, (to omit other considerations,) our
XXVI. nature is not so averse from charity, or destitute of propensions thereto ; and therefore cherishing the natural seeds of it, we may improve it to higher degrees.

6. But supposing the inclinations of nature, as it now standeth in its depraved and crazy state, do so mightily obstruct the practice of this duty in the degree specified, so that however we cannot by any force of reason or philosophy attain to desire so much or relish so well the good of others as our own ; yet we must remember, that a subsidiary power is by the divine mercy dispensed, able to control and subdue nature to a compliance, to raise our practice above our natural forces. We have a like averseness to other spiritual duties, (to the loving God with all our hearts, to the mortifying our flesh and carnal desires, to the contempt of worldly things, and placing our happiness in spiritual goods;) yet we are able to perform them by the succour of grace, and in virtue of that omnipotency which St. Paul assum-

Phil. iv. 13. ed to himself when he said, *I can do all things by Christ enabling me.*

2 Tim. i. 7.

If we can get *the Spirit of love*, (and assuredly we may get it, if we carefully will seek it, with constant fervency imploring it from him, who hath promised to bestow it on those that ask it,) it will infuse into our minds that light, whereby we shall discern the excellency of this duty, together with the folly and baseness of that selfishness which crosseth it ; it will kindle in our hearts charitable affections, disposing us to wish all good to our neighbour, and to feel pleasure therein ; it will render us *partakers of that divine nature*, which so will guide and urge us

in due measure to affect the benefit of others, as now S E R M. corrupt nature doth move us unmeasurably to covet XXVI.
 our own ; being supported and elevated by its virtue,
 we may, surmounting the clogs of fleshly sense and
 conceit, soar up to the due pitch of charity ; being
^{θεοδιάκοτος, taught of God to love one another :} and ^{1 Thess. iv.}
 endowed with ^{9.} the fruits of the Spirit, which are ^{Gal. v. 22.}
love, gentleness, goodness, meekness ; and created ^{Eph. v. 9.}
according to God in Christ Jesus to the practice of ^{Col. iii. 12.}
^{Eph. iv. 24.}
^{ii. 10.}
 answerable good works.

7. There are divers means conduicible to the abatement of difficulty in this practice, which I shall propose, referring the matter to issue upon due trial of them.

1. Let us carefully weigh the value of those things which immoderate self-love doth affect in prejudice to charity, together with the worth of those which charity doth set in balance to them.

Aristotle himself doth observe, that the ground of culpable self-love, scraping, scrambling, scuffling for particular interest, is men's high esteem and passion for, and greedy appetite of wealth, of honours, of corporeal pleasures : whereas virtuous persons, not admiring those things, will constantly act for honesty sake, and out of love to their friends or country ; wherein although they most really benefit and truly gratify themselves, yet are they not blamed for selfishness ^{c.}

^c Οἱ μὲν ὅδη εἰς ἔνεδος ἀγαπτεῖς αὐτὸς, φιλαύτους καλῶσι τοὺς ἁντοῖς ἀσωμένατας, τὸ πλεῖστον ἐν χρήμασι, καὶ τιμαῖς, καὶ ἡδοναῖς ταῖς συμπατικαῖς τούτων γὰρ οἱ πολλοὶ δρέγονται, καὶ ἐσπουδάκασι περὶ αὐτὰ, ὡς ἄριστα ὥστα διὸ καὶ περιμάχητά ἔστιν οἱ δὲ περὶ ταῦτα πλεονέκται χαρίζονται ταῖς ἑτιθυμίαις, καὶ ὅλαις τοῖς πάθεσι, καὶ τῷ ἀλόγῳ τῆς ψυχῆς—δικαῖοις δὲ τοῖς ὅμηροι φιλαύτους ὑπεδέχεται. Arist. Eth. ix. 8. Vid. tot.

SERM. And so indeed it is : if we rightly did apprehend
XXVI. the infinite vanity of all worldly goods, the meanness
of private concerns, the true despicableness of all
those honours, those profits, those delights on which
commonly men do so dote, we should not be so fond
or jealous of them, as to scrape or scuffle for them,
envying or grudging them to others ; if we did con-
ceive the transcendent worth of future rewards al-
lotted to this and other virtues, the great considera-
bleness of public good at which charity aimeth, the
many advantages which may accrue to us from our
neighbour's welfare, (entertained with complacence,
and wisely accommodated to our use,) we should not
be so averse from tendering his good as our own.

2. Let us consider our real state in the world, in
dependence upon the pleasure and providence of
Almighty God.

If we look upon ourselves as subsisting only by
our own care and endeavour, without any other pa-
tronage or help, it may thence prove hard to regard
the interests of others as comparable to our own ;
seeing then, in order to our living with any conveni-
ence, it is necessary that we should be solicitous for
our own preservation and sustenance, that will en-
gage us to contend with others as competitors for the
things we need, and uncapable otherwise to attain :
but if (as we ought to do, and the true state of things
requireth) we consider ourselves as subsisting under
the protection, and by the providence of God, who
no less careth for us than for others, and no less for
others than for us ; (for, as the Wise Man saith, he
careth for all alike;) who recommendeth to us a
being mutually concerned each for other, and is en-
gaged to keep us from suffering thereby ; who com-

mandeth us to disburden our cares upon himself; SERM.
who assuredly will the better provide for us, as we XXVI.
do more further the good of others : if we do con-
sider thus, it will deliver us from solicitude concern-
ing our subsistence and personal accommodations,
whence we may be free to regard the concerns of
others, with no less application than we do regard
our own.

As living under the same government and laws
(being members of one commonwealth, one corpora-
tion, one family) disposeth men not only willingly
but earnestly to serve the public interest, beyond any
hopes of receiving thence any particular advantage
answerable to their pain and care ; so considering
ourselves as members of the world, and of the
church, under the governance and patronage of
God, may disengage us from immoderate respect of
private good, and incline us to promote the common
welfare.

3. There is one plain way of rendering this duty
possible, or of perfectly reconciling charity to self-
love ; which is, a making the welfare of our neigh-
bour to be our own : which if we can do, then easily
may we desire it more seriously, then may we pro-
mote it with the greatest zeal and vigour : for then
it will be an instance of self-love to exercise charity;
then both these inclinations conspiring will march
evenly together, one will not extrude nor depress
the other.

It may be hard, while our concerns appear di-
vided, not to prefer our own ; but when they are
coincident, or conspire together, the ground of that
partiality is removed.

Nor is this an imaginary course, but grounded in

SER.M. reason, and thereby reducible to practice : for considering the manifold bands of relation (natural, civil, or spiritual) between men, as naturally of the same kind and blood, as civilly members of the same society, as spiritually linked in one brotherhood ; considering the mutual advantages derivable from the wealth and welfare of each other, (in way of needful succour, advice, and comfort, of profitable commerce, of pleasant conversation;) considering the mischiefs which from our neighbour's indigency and affliction we may incur, they rendering him as a wild beast, unsociable, troublesome, and formidable to us ; considering that we cannot be happy without good nature, and good humour, and that good nature cannot behold any sad object without pity and dolorous resentment, good humour cannot subsist in prospect of such objects ; considering that charity is an instrument, whereby we may apply all our neighbour's good to ourselves, it being ours, if we can find complacence therein ; it may appear reasonable to reckon all our neighbour's concerns to our account.

That this is practicable, experience may confirm ; for we may observe, that men commonly do thus appropriate the concerns of others, resenting the disasters of a friend or of a relation with as sensible displeasure as they could their own ; and answerably finding as high a satisfaction in their good fortune. Yea many persons do feel more pain by compassion for others, than they could do in sustaining the same evils ; divers can with a stout heart undergo their own afflictions, who are melted with those of a friend or brother. Seeing then in true judgment humanity doth match any other relation,

and Christianity far doth exceed all other alliances, SERM.
why may we not on them ground the like affections XXVI.
and practices, if reason hath any force, or considera-
tion can anywise sway in our practice ?

4. It will greatly conduce to the perfect observ-
ance of this rule, to the depression of self-love, and
advancement of charity to the highest pitch, if we
do studiously contemplate ourselves, strictly ex-
amining our conscience, and seriously reflecting on our
unworthiness and vileness ; the infirmities and de-
fects of nature, the corruptions and defilements of
our soul, the sins and miscarriages of our lives :
which doing, we shall certainly be far from admiring
or doting on ourselves ; but rather, as Job did, we
shall *condemn* and *abhor ourselves* : when we see Job ix. 20.
ourselves so deformed and ugly, how can we be
xliii. 6.
amiable in our own eyes ? how can we more esteem
or affect ourselves than others, of whose unworthi-
ness we can hardly be so conscious or sure ? What
place can there be for that vanity and folly, for that
pride and arrogance, for that partiality and injustice,
which are the sources of immoderate self-love ?

5. And lastly, we may from many conspicuous
experiments and examples be assured that such a
practice of this duty is not impossible ; but these I
have already produced and urged in the precedent
discourse, and shall not repeat them again.

S E R M O N XXVII.

THE NATURE, PROPERTIES, AND ACTS OF CHARITY.

EPHES. V. 2.

And walk in love.

SERM. ST. Paul telleth us, that *the end of the command-*

XXVII. *ment* (or the main scope of the evangelical doctrine) ^{1 Tim. i. 5.} *is charity, out of a pure heart and a good con-*

science, and faith unfeigned; that charity is a general principle of all good practice; (*let all your* ^{1 Cor. xvi. 14.} *things be done in charity;*) that is the sum and ^{13.} *Gal. v. 14.* abridgment of all other duties, so that *he that lov-*

^{8, 9.} *eth another, hath fulfilled the whole law;* that it is ^{1 Cor. xiii. 13.}

the chief of the theological virtues; the prime fruit ^{13.} *Gal. v. 22.* *of the divine Spirit, and the band of perfection,* ^{Col. iii. 14.} *which combineth and consummateth all other graces.*

2 Pet. i. 7. St. Peter enjoineth us that to all other virtues we should add charity, as the top and crown of them;

1 Pet. iv. 8. and, *Above all things, saith he, have fervent char-*

ity among yourselves.

Jam. ii. 8. St. James styleth the law of charity *νόμον βασιλικὸν,* *the royal, or sovereign, law:*

1 John iii. 23, 11. 4. St. John calleth it, in way of excellence, *the com-*

mandment of God; This is his commandment, that we should love one another.

John xv. 12. Our Lord claimeth it for his peculiar law; *This* ^{xiii. 34.} *is my commandment; and, A new commandment I*

give unto you, That ye love one another. And he maketh the observance of it the special badge and cognizance of his followers ; *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.*

S.E.R.M.
XXVII.

John xiiii.
35.

It being therefore a duty of so grand importance, it is most requisite that we should well understand it, and faithfully observe it ; to which purposes I shall, by God's assistance, endeavour to confer somewhat, first by explaining its nature, then by pressing the observance of it by several inducements.

The nature of it will, as I conceive, be best understood by representing the several chief acts, which it compriseth or implieth as necessary prerequisites, or essential ingredients, or inseparable adherents to it ; some internally resident in the soul, others discharged in external performance ; together with some special properties of it. And such are those which follow.

I. *Loving our neighbour* doth imply, that we should value and esteem him : this is necessary, for affection doth follow opinion ; so that we cannot like any thing which we do not esteem, or wherein we do not apprehend some considerable good, attractive of affection ; that is not amiable, which is wholly contemptible ; or so far as it is such.

But in right judgment no man is such ; for the Wise Man telleth us, that *he that despiseth his neighbour, sinneth* ; and, *He is void of understanding that despiseth his neighbour* : but no man is guilty of sin or folly for despising that which is wholly despicable.

It is indeed true, that every man is subject to defects and to mischances, apt to breed contempt, espe-

Prov. xiv.

21.

Prov. xi. 12.

SERM. cially in the minds of vulgar and weak people ; but
XXVII. no man is really despicable. For,

Every man living hath stamped on him the venerable image of his glorious Maker, which nothing incident to him can utterly deface.

Every man is of a divine extraction, and allied to Heaven by nature and by grace ; as the son of God, and brother of God incarnate. *If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me ; what then shall I do when God riseth up ? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him ? Did not he that made me in the womb make him ? and did not one fashion us in the womb ?*

Job xxxi.
^{13, 14, 15.}
 Every man is endued with that celestial faculty of reason, *inspired by the Almighty*, (for, *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding,*) and hath an immortal spirit residing in him ; or rather is himself an angelical spirit dwelling in a visible tabernacle.

Every man was originally designed and framed for a fruition of eternal happiness.

Every man hath an interest in the common redemption, purchased by the blood of the Son of God, who *tasted death for every one.*

Every man is capable of sovereign bliss, and hath a crown of endless glory offered to him.

In fine, every man, and all men alike, antecedently to their own will and choice, are the objects of his love, of his care, of his mercy ; who is *loving unto every man, and whose mercy is over all his works :*

Ps. cxlv. 9.
 Job xxxiv.
^{19.}
 Wisd. vi. 8.
 Rom. x. 12.
 iii. 22.

who hath made the small and the great, and careth for all alike ; who is rich, in bounty and mercy, toward all that call upon him.

How then can any man be deemed contemptible, S E R M. having so noble relations, capacities, and privileges? XXVII.
How a man standeth in esteem with God Elihu tell-
eth us; *God, saith he, is mighty, and despiseth not* Job xxxvi. *any:* although he be so mighty, so excellent in per-^{5.} Ps. lxix. 33.
fection, so infinitely in state exalted above all, yet
doth not he slight any; and how can we condemn
those, whom the certain voucher and infallible judge
of worth deigneth to value? Indeed God so valued
every man as to take great care, to be at great cost
and trouble, to stoop down from heaven, to assume
mortal flesh, to endure pinching wants and sore dis-
tresses, to *taste death for every one.*

We may ask with St. Paul, *Why dost thou set at* Rom. xiv.
nought thy brother? ^{10.}

Is it for the lowness of his condition, or for any misfortune that hath befallen him? But are not Jam. ii. 5.
Ps. xxxvii. the best men, art not thou thyself obnoxious to 33. cxlv. 9. the like? Hath not God declared that he hath a special regard to such? And are not such things commonly disposed by his hand with a gracious intent?

Is it for meanness of parts, or abilities, or endowments? But are not these the gifts of God, absolutely at his disposal, and arbitrarily distributed or preserved; so that thou who art so wise in thy own conceit to-day, mayest, by a disease, or from a judgment, deserved by thy pride, become an idiot to-morrow? Have not many good, and therefore many happy Cor. i. 26. men, wanted those things?

Is it for moral imperfections or blemishes; for vicious habits, or actual misdemeanours? These indeed are the only debasements and disparagements of a man; yet do they not expunge the characters of di-

SERM. vinity impressed on his nature; and he may by God's
XXVII. mercy recover from them. And are not we our-
 selves, if grace do not uphold us, liable to the same? Yea, may we not, if without partiality or flattery we examine ourselves, discern the same within us, or other defects equivalent? And, however, is not pity rather due to them than contempt? Whose charac-
 Luke xviii. ter was it, that *they trusted they were righteous,*
 9. xvi. 15. *and despised others?* That the most palpable of-
 fender should not be quite despised, God had a spe-
 cial care in his Law, for that end moderating punish-
 Deut. xxv. ment, and restraining the number of stripes; *If,*
 2, 3. saith the Law, *the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number. Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.*

We may consider that the common things, both good and bad, wherein men agree, are far more considerable than the peculiar things wherein they differ; to be a man is much beyond being a lord, or a wit, or a philosopher; to be a Christian doth infinitely surpass being an emperor, or a learned clerk; to be a sinner is much worse than to be a beggar, or an idiot. The agreement of men is in the substance and body of things; the difference is in a circumstance, a fringe, or a shadow about them; so that we cannot despise another man, without reflecting contempt on ourselves, who are so very like him, and not considerably better than he, or hardly can without arrogance pretend to be so.

We may therefore, and reason doth require that

we should value our neighbour ; and it is no impossible or unreasonable precept which St. Peter giveth us, to honour all men ; and with it a charitable mind will easily comply : it ever will descry something valuable, something honourable, something amiable in our neighbour ; it will find somewhat of dignity in the meanest, somewhat of worth in the basest, somewhat hopeful in the most degenerate of men ; it therefore will not absolutely slight or scorn any man whatever, looking on him as an abject or forlorn wretch, unworthy of consideration.

It is indeed a point of charity to see more things estimable in others than in ourselves ; or to be apprehensive of more defects meriting disesteem in ourselves than in others ; and consequently in our opinion to prefer others before us, according to those apostolical precepts, *Be kindly affected one toward another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another. In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Be subject one to another.*

II. Loving our neighbour doth imply a sincere and earnest desire of his welfare, and good of all kinds, in due proportion : for it is a property of love, that it would have its object most worthy of itself, and consequently that it should attain the best state whereof it is capable, and persist firm therein ; to be fair and plump, to flourish and thrive without diminution or decay ; this is plain to experience in respect to any other thing (a horse, a flower, a building, or any such thing) which we pretend to love : wherefore charity should dispose us to be thus affected to our neighbour ; so that we do not look upon his condition or affairs with an indifferent eye

SERM.
XXVII.¹ Pet. ii. 17.¹ Cor. xiii.Rom. xii.
^{10.}

Phil. ii. 3.

¹ Pet. v. 5.

SERM. or cold heart, but are much concerned for him, and
XXVII. put forth hearty wishes for his interests: we should
 wish him adorned with all virtue, and accomplished
 with all worthy endowments of soul; we should wish
 him prosperous success in all his designs, and a com-
 fortable satisfaction of his desires; we should wish
 him with alacrity of mind to reap the fruits of his in-
 dustry, and to enjoy the best accommodations of his
 life. Not formally and in compliment, as the mode
 is, but really and with a cordial sense, upon his un-
 dertaking any enterprise, we should wish him good
 speed; upon any prosperous success of his endeavours,
 we should bid him joy; wherever he is going,
 whatever he is doing, we should wish him peace and
 the presence of God with him: we should tender
 his health, his safety, his quiet, his reputation, his
 wealth, his prosperity in all respects; but especially
 with peculiar ardency we should desire his final wel-
 fare, and the happiness of his soul, that being incom-
 parably his chief concern.

Hence readily should we pour forth our prayers,
 which are the truest expressions of good desire, for
 the welfare of our neighbour, to him who is able to
 work and bestow it.

Such was the charity of St. Paul for his country-
Rom. x. 1. men, signified in those words, *Brethren, my heart's
 desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they
 may be saved;* such was his love to the Philippians,
1 Cor. xiii.
 9. *God is my record, how greatly I long after you
 all, in the bowels of Jesus Christ: and this I pray,
 that your love may abound more and more in know-
 ledge, and in all judgment.*

Such was St. John's charity to his friend Gaius, to
3 John 2. whom he said, *Beloved, I wish above all things that*

thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. SERM.
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Such is the charity, which we are enjoined to express toward all men, by *praying for all men*, in ^{1 Tim. ii. 3.} conformity to the charity of God, who *will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

Such is the charity we are commanded to use toward our enemies, *blessing those who curse us, and praying for those who despitefully use us, and persecute us*; the which was exemplified by our Lord, ^{Matt. v. 44.} ^{Luke xxiii. 34.} ^{Acts vii. 60.} ^{1 Cor. iv. 12.} by St. Stephen, by all the holy apostles.

III. Charity doth imply a complacence or delightful satisfaction in the good of our neighbour; this is consequent on the former property, for that joy naturally doth result from events agreeable to our desire: charity hath a good eye, which is not offended or dazzled with the lustre of its neighbour's virtue, or with the splendour of his fortune, but vieweth either of them steadily with pleasure, as a very delightful spectacle; it beholdeth him to prosper and flourish, to grow in wealth and repute, not only without envious repining, but with gladsome content: its property is *to rejoice with them that rejoice*; to partake of their enjoyments, to feast in their pleasures, ^{Rom. xii. 15.} to triumph in their success.

As one member doth feel the health and the delight which another immediately doth enjoy; so hath a charitable man a sensible complacence in the welfare and joy of his neighbour.

His prosperity of any kind, in proportion to its importance, doth please him; but especially his spiritual proficiency and improvement in virtue doth

SERM. yield matter of content; and his good deeds he be-
XXVII. holdeth with abundant satisfaction.

²Cor. xiii. 9. This is that instance of charity which St. Paul
Phil. ii. 2.
iv. 1.
¹ Thess. iii.
9. ii. 19. so frequently doth express in his Epistles, declaring
the extreme joy he did feel in the faith, in the vir-
tue, in the orderly conversation of those brethren
to whom he writeth.

This charity possessed St. John, when he said,
³ John 4. *I have no greater joy than to hear that my chil-
dren walk in truth.*

This is the charity of heaven, which doth even
cheer the angels, and doth enhance the bliss of the
Luke xv. 7, blessed spirits there; of whom it is said, *There is
10. joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth.*

Hence this is the disposition of charitable persons,
sincerely to congratulate any good occurrence to
their neighbour; they are ready to conspire in ren-
dering thanks and praise to the Author of their wel-
fare, taking the good conferred on their neighbour
as a blessing and obligation on themselves; so that
they upon such occasions are apt to say with St.

¹ Thess. iii. Paul, *What thanks can we render to God for you,
9. for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes*

² Thes. i. 3. *before God?* and, *We are bound to thank God
always for you, brethren, because that your faith
groweth exceedingly, and that the charity of
every one of you all toward each other abound-*

¹Cor. i. 4, 5. eth: and, *I thank my God always on your behalf,*
(Rphil. i. 3.)

Rom. i. 8. *for the grace of God which is given you by*
Eph. i. 16.

Col. i. 3. *Jesus Christ, that in every thing ye are enriched*

¹Thes. i. 2.) *by him.*

Eph. v. 20.

It is a precept of St. Paul, *Give thanks always*
inπερ πάντων; which is translated *for all things*, but

it might as well be rendered *for all persons*, accord- SERM.
ing to that injunction, *I exhort, that first of all sup-* XXVII.
*plications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of*ⁱ Tim. ii. 1.
thanks be made for all men: not only prayers are
to be made, but thanksgivings are to be offered for
all men, out of general charity.

IV. Correspondently, love of our neighbour doth imply condolency and commiseration of the evils befalling him : for what we love, we cannot without displeasure behold lying in a bad condition, sinking into decay, or in danger to perish ; so, to a charitable mind, the bad state of any man is a most unpleasant and painful sight.

It is the property of charity to *mourn with*^{κλαίειν.}
those that mourn ; not coldly, but passionately, (for Rom. xii.
15.) it is *to weep with those that weep*,) resenting every man's case with an affection suitable thereto, and as he doth himself resent it.

Is any man fallen into disgrace ? charity doth hold down its head, is abashed and out of countenance, partaking of his shame : is any man disappointed of his hopes or endeavours ? charity crieth out *alas*, as if it were itself defeated : is any man afflicted with pain or sickness ? charity looketh sadly, it sigheth and groaneth, it fainteth and languisheth with him : is any man pinched with hard want ? charity if it cannot succour, it will condole : doth ill news arrive ? charity doth hear it with an unwilling ear and a sad heart, although not particularly concerned in it. The sight of a wreck at sea, of a field spread with carcasses, of a country desolated, of houses burnt and cities ruined, and of the like calamities incident to mankind, would touch the bowels of any man ; but the very report of them would affect the heart of

SERM. charity. It doth not suffer a man with comfort or
XXVII. ease to enjoy the accommodations of his own state,
while others before him are in distress : it cannot be
merry while any man in presence is sorrowful : it
cannot seem happy while its neighbour doth appear
miserable : it hath a share in all the afflictions which
it doth behold or hear of, according to that instance
Συγκατα-
νοῦντες.
Heb. xiii. 3. in St. Paul of the Philippians, *Ye have done well,*
that ye did communicate with (or partake in) *my*
afflictions; and according to that precept, *Remember*
those which are in bonds, as bound with them.

Job xxx.
25. Such was the charity of Job; *Did not I weep*
for him that was in trouble? was not my soul
grieved for the poor?

Such was the charity of the Psalmist, even toward
Psal. xxxv. his ingrateful enemies; *They, saith he, rewarded*
12, 13, 14. *me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul;* but as
for me, when they were sick, *my clothing was sack-*
cloth, I humbled my soul with fasting. I behaved
myself as though it had been my friend or my
brother; I bowed down heavily as one that mourn-
eth for his mother.

2Cor.xi.29. Such was the charity of St. Paul; *Who is weak,*
said he, *and I am not weak? who is offended, and*
I burn not? with fervent compassion.

Such was the charity of our Saviour; which so
reigned in his heart, that no passion is so often at-
tributed to him as this of pity, it being expressed to
Mat.xiv.14. be the motive of his great works. *Jesus, saith St.*
Matthew, went forth, and saw a great multitude,
καὶ ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ' αὐτοῖς, *and was moved (in his bow-*
eels) with compassion toward them, and he healed
Σπλαγχνί-
ζεμα.
Matt. xv. *their sick: and, I have compassion on the multi-*
tude, because they have nothing to eat: and I will
32 xx. 34.

*not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the SERM.
way: and, Jesus had compassion on them, and XXVII.
touched their eyes: and, Jesus, moved with com- Mark i. 41.
passion, put forth his hand and touched him, (the
leper,) and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean:
and, When the Lord saw her, (the widow of Naim, Luk. vii.13.
whose son was carried out,) he had compassion on
her: and, He beheld the city, and wept over it, Luke xix.
considering the miseries impendent on it, as a just^{41.}
punishment of their outrageous injuries against him-
self; and when the two good sisters did bewail their
brother Lazarus, He groaned in spirit, and was John xi.
troubled; and wept with them: whence the Jews^{33, 35, 36.}
did collect, Behold how he loved him!*

Thus any calamity or misfortune befalling his neighbour doth raise distasteful regret and commiseration in a charitable soul; but especially moral evils (which indeed are the great evils, in comparison whereto nothing else is evil) do work that effect: to see men dishonour and wrong their Maker, to provoke his anger, and incur his disfavour; to see men abuse their reason, and disgrace their nature; to see men endamage their spiritual estate, to endanger the loss of their souls, to discost from their happiness, and run into eternal ruin, by distemper of mind and an inordinate conversation; this is most afflictive to a man endued with any good degree of charity. Could one see a man sprawling on the ground, weltering in his blood, with gaping wounds, gasping for breath, without compassion? And seeing the condition of him that lieth groveling in sin, weltering in guilt, wounded with bitter remorse and pangs of conscience, nearly obnoxious to eternal death, is far worse and more deplorable; how can it but touch

SERM. the heart of a charitable man, and stir his bowels
XXVII. with compassionate anguish ?

Such was the excellent charity of the holy Psalm
 Psalm cxix. 1st, signified in those ejaculations, *I beheld the trans-*
158. *gressors, and was grieved; because they kept not*

cxix. 136. *thy word: and, Rivers of waters run down mine*
eyes, because men keep not thy law.

Such was the charity of St. Paul toward his in-
 credulous and obdurate countrymen, (notwithstand-
 ing their hatred and ill treatment of himself,) the
 Rom. ix.
1, 2. which he so earnestly did aver in those words, *I say*
the truth, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me
witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heavi-
ness and continual sorrow in my heart for them.

Such was the charity of our Lord, which disposed
 him as to a continual sense of men's evils, so upon
 particular occasions to grieve at their sins and spi-
 ritual wants; as when the Pharisees maligned him
 for his doing good, he, it is said, did συλλυπεῖσθαι,
 Mark iii. 5. grieve (or condole) for the hardness of their heart;
 Mat. ix. 36. and, When he saw the multitudes, he was moved
 with compassion on them, because they fainted, and
 were scattered abroad as sheep having no shep-
 herd: and when he wept over Jerusalem, because
 Luke xix.
41. it did not know in its day the things which be-
 longed to its peace, (either temporal, or eternal.)

This is that charity, which God himself in a wonder-
 ful and incomprehensible manner doth exemplify to
 James v. 11. us: for he is the *Father of pities*; παλύσπλαγχνος, full
 Luke i. 78. of bowels; his bowels are troubled, and do sound,
 Jer. xxxi.
20. when he is (for upholding justice, or reclaiming sin-
 Isa. lxiii. 15. ners) constrained to inflict punishment; of him it is
 Jud. x. 16. (אָבִיבָנָה. LXX.) said, that his soul was grieved for the misery of
 Isa. Ixiii. 9. (Hos. xi. 8.) Israel; and that he was afflicted in all the afflic-

tions of his people. So incredible miracles doth infinite charity work in God, that the impassible God in a manner should suffer with us, that happiness itself should partake in our misery ; that grief should spring up in the fountain of joy. How this can be, we thoroughly cannot well apprehend ; but surely those expresses are used in condescension to signify the greatly charitable benignity of God, and to shew us our duty, that *we should be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful*, sympathizing with the miseries and sorrows of our brethren.

Luke vi. 36.
Eph. v. 1.
(Luke xvi.
20.)

This is that duty which is so frequently inculcated ; when we are charged to *put on bowels of pity*, to be εὐσπλαγχνοι, *tender-hearted*, to be συμπαθεῖς, *compassionate* one toward another.

Hence it is, that good men in this world cannot live in any briskness of mirth or height of jollity, their own enjoyments being tempered by the discontents of others ; the continual obvious spectacles of sorrow and of sin damping their pleasures, and quashing excessive transports of joy : for who could much enjoy himself in an hospital, in a prison, in a charnel ?

V. It is generally a property of love to appropriate its object ; in apprehension and affection embracing it, possessing it, enjoying it as its own : so charity doth make our neighbour to be ours, engaging us to tender his case and his concerns as our own ; so that we shall exercise about them the same affections of soul, (the same desires, the same hopes and fears, the same joys and sorrows,) as about our own nearest and most peculiar interest ; so that his danger will affright us, and in his security we shall find repose ; his profit is gain, and his losses are damages to us ; we do rise

Col. iii. 12.
Phil. ii. 1.
Eph. iv. 32.
¹ Pet. iii. 8.

SERM. by his preferment, and sink down by his fall; his
XXVII. good speed is a satisfaction, and his disappointment
 a cross to us; his enjoyments afford pleasure, and
 his sufferings bring pain to us.

So charity doth enlarge our minds beyond private considerations, conferring on them an universal interest, and reducing all the world within the verge of their affectionate care; so that a man's self is a very small and inconsiderable portion of his regard:

^{1Cor.xliii.5.} whence charity is said not to *seek its own things*,
^{x. 24.}
^{Phil. ii. 4.} and we are commanded not to *look on our own things*; for that the regard which charity beareth to its own interest, in comparison to that which it beareth toward the concerns of others, hath the same proportion as one man hath to all men; being therefore exceedingly small, and as it were none at all.

This, saith St. Chrysostom, is the canon of most perfect Christianity, this is an exact boundary, this is the highest top of it, to seek things profitable to the public^a: and according to this rule charity doth walk, it prescribeth that compass to itself, it aspireth to that pitch; it disposeth to act as St. Paul did, *I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*

VI. It is a property of love to affect union, or the greatest approximation that can be to its object. As hatred doth set things at distance, making them to shun or chase away one another; so love doth attract things, doth combine them, doth hold them fast together; every one would be embracing and enjoying

^a Τοῦτο κανὼν χριστιανισμοῦ τοῦ πλειοτάτου, τοῦτο ὅρος ἡκριβωμένος, αὕτη ἡ κορυφὴ ἡ ἀνωτάτω, τὸ τὰ κοινῇ συμφέροντα ζητεῖν. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Orat. xxv.

what he loveth in the manner whereof it is capable : SERM.
so doth charity dispose a man to conjunction with XXVII.
others ; it soon will breed acquaintance, kind con-
versation, and amicable correspondence with our
neighbour.

It would be a stranger to no man, to whom by its
intercourse it may yield any benefit or comfort.

Its arms are always open, and its bosom free to
receive all, who do not reject or decline its amity.

It is most frankly accessible, most affable, most
tractable, most sociable, most apt to interchange
good offices ; most ready to oblige others, and willing
to be obliged by them.

It avoideth that unreasonable suspiciousness and
diffidence, that timorous shyness, that crafty reserv-
edness, that supercilious morosity, that fastidious
sullenness, and the like untoward dispositions, which
keep men in estrangement, stifling good inclinations
to familiarity and friendship.

VII. It is a property of love to desire a reciprocal *Spes mutua
charitatis.*
affection ; for that is the surest possession and firm-*Sen. Ep. ix.*
est union, which is grounded upon voluntarily con-
spiring in affection ; and if we do value any person,
we cannot but prize his good-will and esteem.

Charity is the mother of friendship, not only as
inclining us to love others, but as attracting others
to love us ; disposing us to affect their amity, and by
obliging means to procure it.

Hence is that evangelical precept so often enjoined
to us, of *pursuing peace with all men*, importing *Heb. xii. 14.*
that we should desire and seek by all fair means the *2 Tim. ii. 22.*
good-will of men, without which peace from them *Rom. xii. 18.*
cannot subsist ; for if they do not love us, they will
be infesting us with unkind words or deeds.

SERM. VIII. Hence also charity disposeth to please our
XXVII. neighbour, not only by inoffensive but by obliging demeanour; by a ready complaisance and compliance with his fashion, with his humour, with his desire in matters lawful, or in a way consistent with duty and discretion.

Rom. xv. 2. Such charity St. Paul did prescribe; *Let every one please his neighbour, for his good to edification:*
^{1Cor. x. 33.} such he practised himself, *Even as I please ix. 19.* all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit; and, *I have made myself a servant to all, that I might gain the more.*

Rom. xv. 3. Such was the charity of our Lord, for *even*
John ii. 2. *Christ pleased not himself:* he indeed did stoop to converse with sorry men in their way, he came when he was invited, he accepted their entertainment, he from the frankness of his conversation with all sorts of persons did undergo the reproach Mat. xi. 19. of being a *winebibber, a friend of publicans and*
Luk. vii. 34. *sinners.*

It is the genius and complexion of charity to affect nothing uncouth or singular in matters of indifferent nature; to be candid, not rigid in opinion; to be pliable, not stiff in humour; to be smooth and gentle, not rugged and peevish in behaviour.

It doth indeed not flatter, not soothe, not humour any man in bad things, or in things very absurd and foolish; it would rather choose to displease and cross him, than to abuse, to delude, to wrong, or hurt him; but excepting such cases, it gladly pleaseth all men, denying its own will and conceit to satisfy the pleasure and fancy of others; practising that which St. Peter enjoined in that precept, *Be of one mind, be compassionate, love as brethren, be piti-*

ful, be courteous^b; or as St. Paul might intend, SERM. when he bid us, *χαρίζεσθαι ἀλλήλοις, to gratify, to indulge one another.*

XXVII.
Eph. iv. 32.
Col. iii. 13.

IX. Love of our neighbour doth imply readiness upon all occasions do do him good, to promote and advance his benefit in all kinds.

It doth not rest in good opinions of mind, and good affections of heart, but from those roots doth put forth abundant fruits of real beneficence ; it will not be satisfied with faint desires or sluggish wishes, but will be up and doing what it can for its neighbour.

Love is a busy and active, a vigorous and spright-
ful, a courageous and industrious disposition of soul ; which will prompt a man, and push him forward to
undertake or undergo any thing, to endure pains, to
encounter dangers, to surmount difficulties for the
good of its object.

Such is true charity ; it will dispose us *to love*, as ¹ John iii.
St. John prescribeth, *ἔργῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ, in work and in truth* : not only in mental desire, but in effectual ^{8.} James ii.
performance ; not only in verbal pretence, but in real effect.

Hence charity will render a man a general bene-^{Ἄντιλαμβάνειν}-factor, in all matters, upon all occasions ; affording ^{ποθεῖν τὸν}
^{ἀριστεῖσθαι.} to his neighbour all kinds of assistance and relief, ^{Ἄντιχεισθαι} ^{Acts xx. 35.} according to his neighbour's need, and his own ^{τῶν ἑαυτῶν.} ability : it will make him a bountiful dispenser of ^{1 Thess. v.}
^{14.} his goods to the poor, a comforter of the afflicted, a ^{Παραμυθεῖ-}
^{αθεῖ τοὺς ὁλι-} visitor of the sick, an instructor of the ignorant, an ^{γενέψκοντος.}
^{1 Thess. v.} adviser of the doubtful, a protector of the oppressed, ^{14.} Job xxix.
a hospitable entertainer of strangers, a reconciler of ^{17. xxxi.}
^{32.} differences, an intercessor for offenders, an advocate

^b Ομόφρονες, συμπαθεῖς, φιλάδελφοι, εὐσπλαστικοι, φιλάφρονες. 1 Pet. iii. 8.

SERM. of those who need defence, a succourer of all that
XXVII. want help.

Job xxix. The practice of Job describeth its nature ; *I, saith he, delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me ; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame : I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not I searched out : and I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth. If I have held the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail ; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof ; if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering. The stranger did not lodge in the street ; but I opened my doors to the traveller.*

Such is a charitable man ; the sun is not more liberal of his light and warmth, than he is of beneficial influence.

He doth not spare his substance, being *rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate* : and where his estate faileth, yet the contribution of his endeavour will not be wanting ; he will be ready to draw and press others to beneficence ; so doing good not only according to his power, but in a manner beyond it, making the ability of others to supply his own weakness, and being liberal with their wealth. The description of

Corn. Nep. in Cimone. Cimon is a good character of a charitable man, *Nulli fides ejus, nulli opera, nulli res familiaris defuit.*

Thus may the poorest men be great benefac-

tors: so the poor apostles, who *had nothing*, yet SERM. did enrich many; not only in spiritual treasure, but XXVII. taking care for supply of the poor, by their pre-^(1 Cor. iv. 11.)cepts and moving exhortations: and he that *had not* ^{2 Cor. vi. 10.} where to lay his head, was the most bountiful per- ^{τος πρωχος,}son that ever was; for our sake he became poor, ^{τελλασθεις} that we by his poverty might be made rich. ^{πλουτιζοται.} ^{2 Cor. viii. 9.}

In all kinds charity disposeseth to further our neighbour's good, but especially in the concerns of his soul; the which as incomparably they do surpass all others, so it is the truest and noblest charity to promote them.

It will incline us to draw forth our soul to the Isa. lviii. 7 hungry, and to satisfy the afflicted soul; to bring ^{—10.} Ezek. xviii. the poor that are cast out to our house; to cover ^{16.} the naked, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, to break every yoke; to supply any corporal indigency, to relieve any temporal distress: but especially it will induce to make provision for the soul, to relieve the spiritual needs of our neighbour; by affording him good instruction, and taking care that he be informed in his duty, or conducted in his way to happiness; by admonition and exhortation quickening, encouraging, provoking, spurring him to good works; by resolving him in his doubts, and comforting him in his troubles of conscience; (lifting up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees;) by seasonable and prudent reproof: by all ways serving to convert him from the error of his way; and so saving a soul from death, and hiding a multitude of sins; which is the proper work of charity; for charity, saith St. Peter, covereth a multitude of sins.

1 Pet. iv. 8.
Prov. x. 12.

SERM. This was the charity of our Saviour: *He went about doing good*, healing the bodily infirmities, ^{Acts x. 38.} ^{Matt. iv. 23.} ^{ix. 35.} (*every sickness and every disease among the people,*) satisfying their bodily necessities, comforting them in their worldly distresses, so far as to perform great miracles for those purposes; (curing inveterate maladies, restoring limbs and senses, raising the dead, multiplying loaves and fishes :) but his charity was chiefly exercised in spiritual beneficence; in purveying sustenance and comfort for their souls, in feeding their minds by wholesome instruction, in curing their spiritual distempers, in correcting their ^{John xiv. 1.} ^{xv. 11. xvi. 33.} ignorances and errors, in exciting them to duty by powerful advices and exhortations, in supporting ^{Matt. v. 10.} them by heavenly consolations against temptations and troubles.

Thus also did the charity of the holy apostles principally exert itself: they did not neglect affording relief to the outward needs of men; they did take care by earnest intercession and exhortation for support of the poor; but especially they did labour to promote the spiritual benefit of men: for this they did undertake so many cares, and toils, and travels; for this they did undergo so many hardships, so many hazards, so many difficulties and troubles; ^{1 Tim. vi. 18.} ^{Heb. xiii. 16.} ^{^a 2 Tim. ii. 10.} *Therefore, said St. Paul, I endure all things for the elects' sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*

- X. This indeed is a property of charity, to make a man deny himself, to neglect his own interest, yea to despise all selfish regards for the benefit of his neighbour: to him that is inspired with charity, his own good is not good, when it standeth in competition with the more considerable good of another;

nothing is so dear to him, which he gladly will not part with upon such considerations. SERM.
XXVII.

Liberty is a precious thing, which every man gladly would enjoy: yet how little did St. Paul's charity regard it! how absolutely did he abandon it for his neighbour's good! *Though*, said he, *I am πᾶσαν ἵματι
free from all men, yet I have made myself servant* ^{ποίλευλαμα.} _{1 Cor. ix.} (or have enslaved myself) *unto all, that I might* ^{19.} *gain the more:* and he did express much satisfaction in the bonds which he bare for the good of his brethren. *I Paul, saith he, the prisoner of Jesus* ^{Eph. iii.} *Christ for you Gentiles;—I suffer trouble as an* ^{1—13.} _{2 Tim. ii.} *evil-doer, even unto bonds;—endure all things for* ^{9, 10.} *the elects' sake.*

Every man loveth his own humour, and would please himself: but the charity of St. Paul did rather choose *to please all men; making him all things* ^{1 Cor. ix.} *to all men, that by all means he might save some:* ^{33.} _{1 Cor. x.} and the rule he commended to others, and imposed ^{22.} on himself, was this; *We that are strong ought to* ^{Rom. xv. 1.} *bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

Profit is the common mark of men's designs and endeavours; but charity often doth not aim thereat, but waveth it for its neighbour's advantage: for μὴ σκονεῖτε, *Aim not every man at his own things, but* ^{Phil. ii. 4.} *every man also at the things of others,* is St. Paul's rule; and, *Not to seek his own profit, but the profit* ^{1 Cor. x.} _{24.} *of many, that they might be saved,* was his practice.

To suffer is grievous to human nature, and every man would shun it; but charity not only doth support it, but joyeth in it, when it conduceth to its neighbour's advantage; *I rejoice, said that charit-* ^{Col. i. 24.} _{2 Cor. i. 4,} _{6. vii. 4.} *able apostle, in my sufferings for you.*

SERM. Ease is a thing generally desirable and acceptable ;
XXVII. but charity doth part with it, embracing labour, watchings, travels, and troubles for its neighbour's good : upon this account did the holy apostles un-

¹ Thess. ii. dertake *abundant labours*, as St. Paul telleth us ;

^{9.} ² Thess. iii. and *to this end*, saith he, *do I labour, striving ac-*

^{8.} ² Cor. xi. *cording to his working, which worketh in me*

^{23. vi. 5.} *Eis ē xal nē* *mighty* : to what end ? *that we may present every*

πνῶς ἀγανάκτιον *man perfect in Christ Jesus* : this is that *κόπος ἀγά-*

μασμός. Col. i. 29. *πνῶς*, that *labour of love*, which they did command in

Acts xxi. ^{31, 35.} others, and so notably themselves exercise.

¹ Thess. i. 3. Life of all things is held most precious and dear ; yet *this* charity upon urgent occasions will expose,

John xv. will sacrifice for its neighbour's good : *This*, our ^{13.} Lord telleth us, *is the greatest love that any man can express to his friend* ; and the highest instance

that ever was of charity was herein shewed ; the imitation whereof St. John doth not doubt to recom-

¹ John iii. mend to us : *In this*, saith he, *have we known the* ^{16.} *love of God, because he hath laid down his life for*

John xv. *us ; and we ought to lay down our life for the bre-* ^{12.} *thren* : and St. Paul, *Walk in love, even as Christ*

loved us, and gave himself for us an offering and *sacrifice to God* : the which precept he backed with

² Cor. xii. his own example ; *I*, saith he, *very gladly will spend* ^{15.}

and be spent for your souls ; and, *If I be offered* ^{17.} *upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy*

¹ Thess. ii. *and rejoice with you all* ; and, *Being affectionately* ^{8.} *desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted* *unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our* *own souls, because ye were dear unto us*.

Reputation to some is more dear than life, and it is worse than death to be held a malefactor, to be loaded with odious reproaches, to have an infamous

character ; yet charity will engage men hereto, will- SERM.
ingly to sustain the most grievous obloquy and dis- XXVII.
grace : for this the same heroical apostles did pass
through honour and dishonour, through evil re- 2 Cor. vi. 8.
port and good report, as deceivers, and yet true :—
for this they were made a spectacle to the world, 1 Cor. iv. 9,
as fools, as weak, as despicable ;—were reviled, de- 10, 13.
famed, made as the filth of the world, and affscour-
ing of all things. For this St. Paul was content to
suffer, ὡς κακοῦργος, as a malefactor. So there was 2 Tim. ii. 9.
nothing which charity will not deny itself and lose
for the good of its neighbour.

XI. It is a property of love not to stand upon dis-
tinctions and nice respects ; but to be condescensive,
and willing to perform the meanest offices, needful
or useful for the good of its friend.

He that truly loveth is a voluntary servant, and
gladly will stoop to any employment, for which the
need or considerable benefit of him whom he loveth
doth call.

So the greatest souls, and the most glorious beings,
the which are most endued with charity, by it are
disposed with greatest readiness to serve their in-
feriors.

This made St. Paul constitute himself a servant 1 Cor. ix.
(we might render it a slave) of all men, absolutely 19.
devoted to the promoting their interests with his
utmost labour and diligence; undertaking toilsome
drudgeries, running about upon errands for them.

This maketh the blessed and glorious angels (the Psal. xcii.
principalities and powers above) vouchsafe to wait on 11. xxxiv.
men, to be the guards of all good men, to be min- 7.
istering spirits, sent out to minister for them who Heb. i. 7,
shall inherit salvation : not only obedience to God 14.

SERM. enforceth them, but charity disposeth them gladly to
XXVII. serve us, who are so much their inferiors ; the same
Luke xv. 7, charity, which produceth joy in them at the conver-
10. bition, &c., sion of a sinner.
&c.,

This made the Son of God to descend from heaven,
John xvii. and lay aside that *glory which he had with God*
5. *before the world was* ; this made him who was so
2 Cor. viii. *rich to become poor, that we by his poverty might be*
9. *enriched* ; this made him *converse* and demean him-
27. Matt. xx. self among his servants, *as he that ministered* ; this
28. made him to wash his disciples' feet, thereby de-
signing instructively to exemplify the duty and na-
John xiii. ture of charity ; for *If, said he, I, your Lord and*
14. *Master, have washed your feet, then ye also ought*
to wash one another's feet. For I have given you
an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.
Isa. lvii. 15. This maketh God himself (*the high and lofty One*
that inhabiteth eternity) to condescend so far, as to
be continually employed in carefully watching over,
in providing for, in protecting and assisting us vile
Ps. cxiii. 6. and wretched *worms* ; for though *he dwelleth on*
(Ps. viii. 4. *high, yet humbleth he himself to behold the things*
cxliv. 3. *that are in heaven and earth.* This maketh him with
Job vii. 17.) so much pain and patience to support our infirmities,
according to that protestation in the Prophet, Thou
hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast
wearied me with thine iniquities.

In conformity to this wonderful practice, whose
actions are the best rules and patterns of our deport-
ment, charity should dispose us, according to St.
Gal. v. 13. Paul's practice, *by love to serve one another.*

Indeed it will not suffer any man to look down on
another with supercilious contempt or neglect, as if

he were unworthy or beneath our regard. It will SERM. incline superiors to look on their inferiors, (their XXVII. subjects, their servants, their meanest and poorest neighbours,) not as beasts or as slaves, but as Job xxxi. men, as brethren; as descending from the same ^{13, 14, 15.} stock, as partakers of the common nature and reason; as those who have obtained the like precious ^{2 Pet. i. 1.} faith; as heirs of the same precious promises and glorious hopes; as their equals in the best things, and in all considerable advantages; equals in God's Eph. vi. 9. sight, and according to our Lord's intent, when he ^{Col. iv. 1.} Matt. xxiii. said, *One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye⁹ are brethren;* according to St. Paul's exhortation to Philemon, that he would receive Onesimus, *not now* ^{Philem. 16.} as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved in the Lord.

Accordingly charity will dispose men of rank in their behaviour to be condescensive, lowly, meek, courteous, obliging and helpful to those, who in human eye or in worldly state are most below them; remembering that ordinance of our Lord, charged on all his disciples, and enforced by his own pattern, *He that is greatest among you let him be your* ^{Matt. xxiii.} servant. ^{11.} ^{Luke xxii.}

Love indeed is the great leveller, which in a manner setteth all things on even ground, and reduceth ^{27.} ^{Amicitia pares investit, aut} to a just poise; which bringeth down heaven to earth, and raiseth up earth to heaven; which inclineth the highest to wait upon the lowest; which engageth the strength of the mightiest to help the weakest, and the wealth of the richest to supply the poorest, ὅπως γένηται ισότης, that there may be an ^{2 Cor. viii.} equality; that no where there may be an useless ^{14.} abundance, or a helpless indigence.

SERM. XII. Charity doth regulate our dealing, our deportment, our conversation toward our neighbour, implying good usage and fair treatment of him on all occasions ; for no man doth handle that which he loveth rudely or roughly, so as to endanger the loss, the detriment, the hurt or offence thereof.

Wherefore the language of charity is soft and sweet, not wounding the heart, nor grating on the ear of any with whom a man converseth ; like the

*Prov. xv.
26.*

*Prov. xvi.
24.*

*Eccles. x.
12.*

language of which the Wise Man saith, *The words of the pure are pleasant words* ;—such as are *sweet to the soul, and health to the bones* : and, *The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious* ; such as *Luke iv. 22.* our Lord's were, *λόγοι χάριτος, words of grace* ; such *Col. iv. 6.* as the apostle speaketh of, *Let your speech be always ἐν χάριτι, with grace*—such as may give *Eph. iv. 29.* *grace to the hearers* ; being entertained, not with aversation, but with favourable acceptance.

Its carriage is gentle, courteous, benign ; bearing in it marks of affection and kind respect.

Its dealing is equal, moderate, fair, yielding no occasion of disgust or complaint ; not catching at, or taking advantages, not meting hard measure.

It doth not foster any bad passion or humour, which may embitter or sour conversation, so that it rendereth a man continually good company.

If a man be harsh or surly in his discourse, rugged or rude in his demeanour, hard and rigorous in his dealing, it is a certain argument of his defect in charity : for that calmeth and sweeteneth the mind ; it quasheth keen, fierce, and boisterous passions ; it discardeth those conceits, and those humours, from whence such practice doth issue.

1Cor. xiii. 5. *Charity, saith St. Paul, οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ, behaveth not*

itself unhandsomely; is not untoward, unseemly, uncivil, or clownish in word, or in carriage, or in SERM. XXVII. deed: it is in truth the most civilizing and most polishing disposition that can be; nothing doth render a man so completely genteel; not in an affected or artificial way, (consisting in certain postures or motions of body; (dopping, cringing, &c.) in forms of expression, or modish addresses, which men learn like parrots, and vent by rote, usually not meaning any thing by them, often with them disguising fraud and rancour,) but in a real and natural manner, suggested by good judgment and hearty affection.

A charitable man may perhaps not be guilty of courtship, or may be unpractised in the modes of address; but he will not be deficient in the substance of paying every man proper and due respect: this indeed is true courtesy, grounded on reason, and proceeding from the heart; which therefore is far more genuine, more solid, more steady, than that which is built on fashion and issueth from affectation; the which indeed only doth ape or counterfeit the deportment of charity: for what a charitable man truly is, that a gallant would seem to be.

Such are the properties of charity.

There be also further many particular acts, which have a very close alliance to it, (being ever coherent with it, or springing from it,) which are recommended to us by precepts in the holy scripture; the which it will be convenient to mention.

1. It is a proper act of charity to forbear anger upon provocation, or to repress its motions; to resent injuries and discourtesies either not at all, or very calmly and mildly: for,

Charity *oὐ παροξύνεται, is not easily provoked.*

1 Cor.xiii.5.

SERM. Charity μακροθυμεῖ, *suffereth long and is kind.*
 XXVII. Charity πάντα ἴπομένει, *doth endure all things.*
1Cor. xiii. 4.
Verse 7. Anger is a violent insurrection of the mind against
 a person, but love is not apt to rise up in opposition
 against any ; anger is an intemperate heat, love hath
 a pure warmth quite of another nature ; as natural
 heat is from a fever ; or as the heat of the sun from
 that of a culinary fire, which putteth that out as the
 sun-beams do extinguish a culinary fire : anger hath
Rom. xiii. 10. an ὕρεξις ἀμύνης, *an appetite of revenge*, or doing
 mischief to the object of it ; but love is innocent
 and worketh no evil.

Love disposeth, if our neighbour doth misbehave
 himself toward us, (by wrongful usage, or unkind
 carriage,) to be sorry for him, and to pity him ; which
 are passions contrary to anger, and slaking the vio-
 lences of it.

Cant. viii. It is said in the Canticles, *Many waters cannot
 7. quench love, neither can the floods drown it* : charity
 would hold out against many neglects, many
 provocations.

Ἄνιχτος
 ἀλλαχτεῖ
 σύστημα
 Eph. iv. 2.
Eph. iv. 31.
 1 Thess. v.
 14.
 Col. iii. 8.
 μαζεψθ. Hence the precepts ; *Walk with all lowliness and
 meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one an-
 other in love: Let all bitterness, and wrath, and
 anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away
 from you, with all malice: Put off anger, wrath,
 malice, &c. Be slow to wrath.*

*Jam. i. 19. 2. It is a proper act of charity to remit offences,
 suppressing all designs of revenge, and not retaining
 any grudge : for,

1 Cor. xiii. 7.
 Prov. x. 12.
 1 Pet. iv. 8.
 Jam. v. 20. *Charity πάντα στέγει, doth cover all things* ; and in
 this sense doth *hide a multitude of sins* : all disposi-
 tions, all intents to do harm are inconsistent with it,
 are quite repugnant to it.

Hence those precepts ; *Put on, as the elect of God,* SERM. XXVII.
holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, hum- Col. iii. 12.
bleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbear- 13.
ing one another, and forgiving one another, if any μορφήν.
man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ
forgave you, so also do ye : Be ye kind one to an- Eph. iv. 32.
other, tender-hearted, forgiving one another ; even
as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you : See ¹ Thess. v.
that none render evil for evil, but ever follow that ^{15.} Pet. iii. 9.
which is good both among yourselves and to all ^{Rom. xii. 17.}
men : and many the like precepts occur in the ^{Matt. vi.}
gospels, the apostolical writings ; yea even in the ^{14. v. 44.} Prov. xx.
Old Testament, wherein charity did not run in so ^{22.} xxv. 21.
bigh a strain.

3. It is a duty coherent with charity, to maintain concord and peace; to abstain from contention and strife, together with the sources of them, pride, envy, emulation, malice.

We are commanded to be σύμψυχοι, and διαφρόνες,
of one soul, of one mind, (like the multitude of be- Phil. ii. 2.
lievers in the Acts, who had one heart and one soul ;) 1 Pet. iii. 8.
that we should keep the unity of the Spirit in the Acts iv. 32.
bond of peace ; that we should be of one accord, of Eph. iv. 3.
one mind, standing fast in one spirit, with one mind ; Phil. ii. 2.
that we should all speak the same thing, and that i. 27.
there be no divisions among us, but that we be per- i. Cor. i. 10.
fectly joined together in the same mind, and in the 2 Cor. xiii. 11.
same judgment ; that there be no factions, or schisms Rom. xv. 5, 6. xii. 16.
in the body ; that all dissensions, all clamours, all Phil. iii. 16.
murmurings, all emulations should be abandoned and i. Cor. xii. 20.
put away from us ; that we should pursue and main- Phil. ii. 14.
tain peace with all men : obedience to which com- Heb. xii. 14.
mands can only be the result of charity, esteeming Rom. xii. 18.
the person and judgment of our neighbour ; desiring 2 Tim. ii. 22.
Jam. iv. 1.
Cor. iii. 3.
Gal. v. 20.

SERM. his good-will, tendering his good; curbing those
XXVII. fleshly lusts, and those fierce passions, from the pre-
 dominancy whereof discords and strifes do spring.

4. Another charitable practice is, being candid in opinion, and mild in censure, about our neighbour and his actions; having a good conceit of his person, and representing him to ourselves under the best character we can; making the most favourable construction of his words, and the fairest interpretation of his designs.

Charity disposeth us to entertain a good opinion of our neighbour; for desiring his good we shall be concerned for him, and prejudiced, as it were, on his side; being unwilling to discover any blemish in him to our own disappointment and regret.

Love cannot subsist without esteem; and it would not willingly by destroying that lose its own subsistence.

Love would preserve any good of its friend, and therefore his reputation; which is a good in itself precious, and ever very dear to him.

Love would bestow any good, and therefore its esteem; which is a considerable good.

Harsh censure is a very rude kind of treatment, grievously vexing a man, and really hurting him; charity therefore will not be guilty of it.

It disposeth rather to oversee and connive at faults, than to find them, or to pore on them; rather to hide and smother, than to disclose or divulge them; rather to extenuate and excuse, than to exaggerate or aggravate them.

Are words capable of a good sense? charity will expound them thereto: may an action be imputed to any good intent? charity will ever refer it thither:

doth a fault admit any plea, apology, or diminution ? SERM. charity will be sure to allege it : may a quality admit XXVII. a good name ? charity will call it thereby.

It doth not λογίζεσθαι κακὸν, *impute evil*, or put it to ^{1 Cor. xiii.} any man's account, beyond absolute necessity. ^{5.}

It *hopeth all things*, and *believeth all things* ; ^{1 Cor. xiii.} hopeth and believeth all things for the best, in favour ^{7.} to its neighbour, concerning his intentions and actions liable to doubt.

It banisheth *all evil surmises* ; it rejecteth all ill ^{1 Tim. vi. 4.} stories, malicious insinuations, perverse glosses and descendants.

5. Another charitable practice is, to comport with the infirmities of our neighbour ; according to that rule of St. Paul, *We that are strong ought to bear ^{Anτιχεῖσθαι} the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our-^{σέβεσθαι.} selves* ; and that precept, *Bear one another's bur-^{Acts xx. 35.} dens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.* ^{1 Thess. v. 14.} ^{Rom. xv. 1.} ^{Gal. vi. 2.}

Is a man wiser than his neighbour, or in any case freer of defects ? charity will dispose to use that advantage so as not to condemn him, or insult over him ; but to instruct him, to help him, to comfort him.

As we deal with children, allowing to the infirmities of their age, bearing their ignorance, frowardness, untoward humours, without distasting them ; so should we with our brethren who labour under any weakness of mind or humour.

6. It is an act of charity to abstain from offending, or scandalizing our brethren ; by doing any thing, which either may occasion him to commit sin, or disaffect him to religion, or discourage him in the practice of duty, (that which St. Paul calleth to

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SER M. **defile and smite his weak conscience,*) or which any-
XXVII. wise may discompose, vex, and grieve him: for, *If thy*
brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou
^{1 Cor. x. 7.}
not charitably.

**Μαλάνται.* 1 Cor. viii. 12. Rom. xiv. 15. Οὐσίᾳ κατὰ δύσκολην προστελλεῖ. 1 Cor. x.
32. viii. 13. Rom. xiv. 21.

S E R M O N XXVIII.

MOTIVES AND ARGUMENTS TO CHARITY.

HEB. x. 24.

Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.

THAT which is here recommended by the apostle, SERM. as the common duty of Christians toward each other, XXVIII. upon emergent occasions, with zeal and care to provoke one another to the practice of charity and beneficence, may well be conceived the special duty of those, whose office it is to instruct and guide others, when opportunity is afforded: with that obligation I shall now comply, by representing divers considerations serving to excite and encourage us to that practice: this (without premising any description or explication of the duty; the nature, special acts, and properties whereof I have already declared) I shall immediately undertake.

I. First then, I desire you to remember and consider that you are men, and as such obliged to this duty, as being very agreeable to human nature; the which, not being corrupted or distempered by ill use, doth incline to it, doth call for it, doth like and approve it, doth find satisfaction and delight therein.

St. Paul chargeth us to be *εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι*, Rom. xii.
10.

SERM. or *to have a natural affection one toward another*:
XXVIII. that supposeth a *στοργὴν* inbred to men, which should

be roused up, improved, and exercised. Such an one indeed there is, which, although often raked up and smothered in the common attendances on the providing for our needs, and prosecuting our affairs, will upon occasion more or less break forth and discover itself.

That the constitution and frame of our nature disposeth to it, we cannot but feel, when our bowels are touched with a sensible pain at the view of any calamitous object; when our fancies are disturbed at the report of any disaster befalling a man; when the sight of a tragedy wringeth compassion and tears from us: which affections we can hardly quash by any reflection, that such events, true or feigned, do not concern ourselves.

Hence doth nature so strongly affect society, and abhor solitude; so that a man cannot enjoy himself alone, or find satisfaction in any good without a companion^a: not only for that he then cannot receive, but also because he cannot impart assistance, consolation, and delight in converse: for men do not affect society only that they may obtain benefits thereby; but as much or more, that they may be enabled to communicate them; nothing being more distasteful than to be always on the taking hand: neither

^a Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἔλαστρὸς καθ' αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα ἔχειν ἀγαθά. Arist. Eth. x. 9.

Hominem homini natura conciliat. Sen. Ep. ix.

Nullius boni sine socio jucunda possessio est. Sen. Ep. vi.

Καὶ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς βουλόμενος συνδῆσαι πάντας ἀλλήλοις, τοιαύτην τοῦ πρόγ-
ματος ἐπέθηκεν ἀνάγκην, ὡς ἐν τῷ τῶν πλησίων συμφέροντι τὸ τοῦ ἑτέρου δε-
δέσθαι· καὶ δὲ κόσμος ἄκας οὔτω συνέστηκε. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. xxv.

indeed hath any thing a more pleasant and savoury SERM.
relish than to do good ; as even Epicurus, the great XXVIII.
patron of pleasure, did confess.

The practice of benignity, of courtesy, of clemency, do at first sight, without aid of any discursive reflection, obtain approbation and applause from men ; being acceptable and amiable to their mind, as beauty to their sight, harmony to their hearing, fragrance to their smell, and sweetness to their taste : and, correspondently, uncharitable dispositions and practices (malignity, harshness, cruelty) do offend the mind with a disgustful resentment of them.

We may appeal to the conscience of each man, if he doth not feel dissatisfaction in that fierceness or frowardness of temper, which produceth uncharitableness ; if he have not a complacence in that sweet and calm disposition of soul, whence charity doth issue ; if he do not condemn himself for the one, and approve himself in the other practice.

This is the common judgment of men ; and therefore in common language this practice is styled humanity, as best sorting with our nature, and becoming it ; and the principle whence it springeth is called good-nature : and the contrary practice is styled inhumanity, as thwarting our natural inclinations, or divesting us of manhood ; and its source likewise is termed ill-nature, or a corruption of our nature.

Eis γὰς φρ-
λαρθεωτιας
ιηγα δινό
Θεοῦ πατε-
ρικών αρεβά.
Flavian.
CP. Ep. in
Syn. Chalc.
Act. i. p.

It is therefore a monstrous paradox, crossing the common sense of men, which in this loose and vain world hath lately got such vogue, that all men naturally are enemies one to another : it pretendeth to be grounded on common observation and experience ; but it is only an observing the worst actions of the worst men ; of dissolute ruffians, of villainous cheats,

SERM. of ravenous oppressors, of malicious politicians, of XXVIII. such degenerate apostates from humanity; by whose practice (debauched by vain conceits and naughty customs) an ill measure is taken of mankind. Aristotle himself, who had observed things as well as any of these men, and with as sharp a judgment, affirmeth the contrary, that all men are friends, and disposed to entertain friendly correspondence with one another^b: indeed to say the contrary is a blasphemy against the Author of our nature; and is spoken no less out of profane enmity against him, than out of venomous malignity against men: out of hatred to God and goodness they would disparage and vilify the noblest work of God's creation; yet do they, if we sound the bottom of their mind, imply themselves to admire this quality, and by their decrying it do commend it: for it is easy to discern that therefore only they slander mankind as incapable of goodness, because out of malignity they would not allow it so excellent a quality.

II. Let us consider what our neighbour is; how near in blood, how like in nature, how much in all considerable respects the same with us he is.

Should any one wrong or defame our brother, we should be displeased; should we do it ourselves, or should we omit any office of kindness toward him, we should blame ourselves: every man is such, of

^b Οἰκεῖον πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ φίλῳ. Arist. Eth. viii. 1. Rhet. i. II.

'Ενέθηκε γάρ ὁ Θεὸς φίλτρον τῇ φύσει τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ, ὥστε ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν. Chrys. in Eph. Orat. ii.

Συνδεσμῶν εἰς ὁμογνωμασόντην ὁ ἀριστοτέχνης Θεὸς ἦν ἐδημιουργησε φύσιν τῇ διαθέσει τοὺς λόγῳ διαικουμένους συνέσφιγξε, &c. Proclus Constanti-nopl. Syn. Chalc. Act. xiv.

one stock, of one blood with us ; and as such may SERM.
challenge and call for real affection from us. XXVIII.

Should any one mar, tear, or deface our picture, or shew any kind of disrespect thereto, we should be offended, taking it for an indignity put on our- Δι ομοίωτη-
της πάντας
φίλων τρόπος
ἀλληλε συ-
στρεισθεντα.
such a manner affront or despite ourselves : every man is such, our most lively image, representing us
most exactly in all the main figures and features of body, of soul, of state ; we thence do owe respect to every one.

Plato
Symp.

Every man is another self, partaker of the same nature, endued with the same faculties, subject to the same laws, liable to the same fortunes ; distinguished from us only in accidental and variable circumstances ; whence if we be amiable or estimable, so is he upon the same grounds ; and acting impartially (according to right judgment) we should yield love and esteem to him : by slighting, hating, injuring, hurting him, we do consequentially abuse ourselves, or acknowledge ourselves deservedly liable to the same usage.

Every man, as a Christian, is in a higher and nobler way allied, assimilated, and identified to us ; to him therefore upon the like grounds improved charity is more due ; and we wrong our heavenly relations, our better nature, our more considerable selves, in withholding it from him.

III. Equity doth plainly require charity from us : for every one is ready not only to wish and seek, but to demand and claim love from others ; so as to be much offended, and grievously to complain, if he do not find it.

We do all conceive love and respect due to us

SERM. from all men ; we take all men bound to wish and
XXVIII. tender our welfare ; we suppose our need to require commiseration and succour from every man : if it be refused, we think it a hard case, and that we are ill used ; we cry out of wrong, of courtesy, of inhumanity, of baseness, practised toward us.

A moderate respect and affection will hardly satisfy us ; we pretend to them in the highest degree, disgusting the least appearance of disregard or disaffection ; we can scarce better digest indifference than hatred.

This evidenceth our opinion and conscience to be, that we ought to pay the greatest respect and kindness to our neighbour : for it is plainly unjust and ridiculously vain, to require that from others, which we refuse to others, who may demand it upon the same title ; nor can we without self-condemnation practise that which we detest in others.

In all reason and equity, if I would have another my friend, I must be a friend to him ; if I pretend to charity from all men, I must render it to all in the same kind and measure.

Hence is the law of charity well expressed in those terms, *of doing to others whatever we would have them do to us* ; whereby the palpable equity of this practice is demonstrated.

IV. Let us consider that charity is a right noble and worthy thing ; greatly perfective of our nature ; much dignifying and beautifying our soul.

It rendereth a man truly great, enlarging his mind unto a vast circumference, and to a capacity near infinite ; so that it by a general care doth reach all things, by an universal affection doth embrace and grasp the world.

By it our reason obtaineth a field or scope of em- SERM.
ployment worthy of it, not confined to the slender XXVIII.
interests of one person or one place, but extending
to the concerns of all men.

Charity is the imitation and copy of that immense Chrys. in
love, which is the fountain of all being and all good; Eph. Or. 9.
which made all things, which preserveth the world,
which sustaineth every creature: nothing advanceth
us so near to a resemblance of him, who is essen-
tial love and goodness; who freely and purely, with-
out any regard to his own advantage or capacity of
finding any beneficial return, doth bear and express
the highest good-will, with a liberal hand pouring
down showers of bounty and mercy on all his crea-
tures; who daily putteth up numberless indignities
and injuries, upholding and maintaining those who
offend and provoke him ^c.

Charity rendereth us as angels, or peers to those
glorious and blessed creatures, who, without receiv-
ing or expecting any requital from us, do heartily
desire and delight in our good, are ready to promote
it, do willingly serve and labour for it. Nothing is
more amiable, more admirable, more venerable, even
in the common eye and opinion of men; it hath in
it a beauty and a majesty apt to ravish every heart;
even a spark of it in generosity of dealing breedeth
admiration, a glimpse of it in formal courtesy of be-
haviour procureth much esteem, being deemed to
accomplish and adorn a man: how lovely therefore

^c Ἡμᾶς εἶτις ἐρωτήσεις, τί τὸ τιμῶμενον ὑμῖν καὶ προσκυνούμενον, πρό-
χειρον εἰπεῖν η̄ ἀγάπη; δὲ γὰρ Θεὸς ἡμῶν η̄ ἀγάπη ἔστι, βῆσις τοῦ ἀγίου
Πνεύματος, καὶ τοῦτο χαῖρει μᾶλλον ἀκούων δὲ Θεός, η̄ τις ἄλλο. Naz. Or. 14.

Καθ' ἴκαστην ὁμοίζεται τὴν ἡμέραν, παρὸν καὶ ὥραν, καὶ ἀκούων, καὶ
οὗτε σκηνὴν ἀφῆκε, &c. Chrys. Ἀδρ. γ'.

SERM. and truly gallant is an entire, sincere, constant and
XXVIII. uniform practice thereof, issuing from pure good-will and affection !

Love indeed or goodness (for true love is nothing else but goodness exerting itself, in direction toward objects capable of its influence) is the only amiable and only honourable thing : power and wit may be admired by some, or have some fond idolaters ; but being severed from goodness, or abstracted from their subserviency to it, they cannot obtain real love, they deserve not any esteem : for the worst, the most unhappy, the most odious and contemptible of beings do partake of them in a high measure ; the prince of darkness hath more power, and reigneth with absolute sovereignty over more subjects by many than the great Turk ; one devil may have more wit than all the politic Achitophels, and all the profane Hectors in the world ; yet with all his power and all his wit he is most wretched, most detestable, and most despicable : and such in proportion is every one, who partaketh in his accursed dispositions of malice and uncharitableness. For,

Sen. de
Tranq. iii.

On the other side, uncharitableness is a very mean and base thing : it contracteth a man's soul into a narrow compass, or straiteneth it as it were into one point ; drawing all his thoughts, his desires, his affections into himself, as to their centre ; so that his reason, his will, his activity have but one pitiful object to exercise themselves about : to scrape together a little pelf, to catch a vapour of fame, to prog for a frivolous semblance of power or dignity, to soothe the humour or pamper the sensuality of one poor worm, is the ignoble subject of his busy care and endeavour.



By it we debase ourselves into an affinity with the meanest things, becoming either like beasts or fiends: like beasts, affecting only our own present sensible good; or like fiends, designing mischief and trouble to others.

It is indeed hard for a man without charity, not to be worse than an innocent beast; not at least to be as a fox, or a wolf; either cunningly lurching, or Ezek. xxii. 27. violently ravening for prey: love only can restrain a man from flying at all, and seizing on whatever he meeteth; from biting, from worrying, from devouring every one that is weaker than himself, or who cannot defend himself from his paws and teeth.

V. The practice of charity is productive of many great benefits and advantages to us: so that to love our neighbour doth involve the truest love to ourselves; and we are not only obliged in duty, but may be encouraged by our interest thereto: beatitude is often pronounced to it, or to some particular instances of it; and well may it be so, for it indeed will constitute a man happy, producing to him manifold comforts and conveniences of life: some whereof we shall touch.

VI. (1.) Charity doth free our souls of all those bad dispositions and passions which vex and disquiet them; from those gloomy passions, which cloud our mind; from those keen passions, which fret our heart; from those tumultuous passions, which ruffle us, and discompose the frame of our soul ^d.

It stiflēth anger, (that swoon of reason, trans-

^d Ο γὰρ τοιῶτος καὶ φθίνου καὶ ὄργης καὶ βασκανίας καὶ ἀπονοίας καὶ κενδόξιας, καὶ τοπηρᾶς ἐπιθυμίας, καὶ παντὸς ἔρωτος ἀτόπου, καὶ παντὸς νο- σήματος καθαρεύοντας τηρήσει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχήν. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Orat. xxxii.

SERM. porting a man out of himself;) for a man hardly can
XXVIII. be incensed against those whom he tenderly loveth :
 a petty neglect, a hard word, a small discourtesy
 will not fire a charitable soul ; the greatest affront
 or wrong can hardly kindle rage therein.

It banisheth envy, (that severely just vice, which
 never faileth to punish itself;) for no man will re-
 pine at his wealth or prosperity, no man will malign
 his worth or virtue, whose good he charitably de-
 sireth and wisheth ^c.

It excludeth rancour and spite, those dispositions
 which create a hell in our soul ; which are directly
 repugnant to charity, and thereby dispelled as dark-
 ness by light, cold by heat.

It suffereth not revenge (that canker of the heart)
 to harbour in our breast ; for who can intend mis-
 chiefto him, in whose good he delighteth, in whose
 evil he feeleth displeasure?

It voideth fear, suspicion, jealousy of mischief de-
 signed against us : the which passions *have torment*,
1 John iv.
18.
οὐδὲν τιχεῖ.
 Oderunt quem me-
 taunt.

or do punish us, as St. John saith, racking us with
 anxious expectation of evil ; wherefore *there is*, saith
 he, *no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear* :
 no man indeed is apt to fear him whom he loveth, or
 is able much to love him whom he feareth : for love
 esteemeth its object as innocent, fear apprehendeth
 it as hurtful ; love disposeth to follow and embrace,
 fear inclineth to decline and shun. To suspect a
 friend therefore is to disavow him for such ; and
 upon slender grounds to conceit ill of him, is to deem
 him unworthy of our love. The innocence and inof-

^c Φθίνος, η δαπάνη τῶν ἔχοντων, ὁ τῶν πασχόντων ἱς, τὸ μάνη τῶν
 παθῶν ἀδικώτατόν τε ἄμα καὶ δικαιότατόν, τὸ μὲν ὅτι πᾶσι διοχλεῖ τοῖς
 καλοῖς, τὸ δὲ δτι τήκει τοὺς ἔχοντας. Gr. Naz. Or. xxvii.

fensiveness of charity, which provoketh no man to do us harm, doth also breed great security and confidence: any man will think he may walk unarmed and unguarded among those to whom he beareth good-will, to whom he neither meaneth nor doeth any harm; being guarded by a good conscience, and shielded with innocence.

It removeth discontent or dissatisfaction in our state; the which usually doth spring from ill conceits and surmises about our neighbour, or from wrathful and spiteful affections toward him: for while men have good respect and kindness for their neighbours, they seldom are dissatisfied in their own condition; they can never want comfort, or despair of succour.

It curbeth ambition and avarice; those impetuous, those insatiable, those troublesome dispositions: for a man will not affect to climb above those, in whose honour he findeth satisfaction; nor to scramble with them for the goods, which he gladly would have them to enjoy: a competency will satisfy him, who taketh himself but for one among the rest, and who can as little endure to see others want as himself: who would trouble himself to get power over those, to overtop them in dignity and fame, to surpass them in wealth, whom he is ready to serve in the meanest offices of kindness, whom he would in honour prefer to himself, unto whom he will liberally communicate what he hath for his comfort and relief?

In the prevalence of such bad passions and dispositions of soul our misery doth most consist; thence the chief troubles and inconveniences of our life do proceed: wherefore charity doth highly deserve of us in freeing us from them.

Kαὶ τὸν
τοῦ ἀγαθο-
μένου σὺν δι-
τεῖς λαρῳδίᾳ
τοι. Chrys.
in Cor.
Or. xxxii.

SERM. VII. (2.) It consequently doth settle our mind in
XXVIII. a serene, calm, sweet, and cheerful state ; in an even
temper, and good humour, and harmonious order of
soul ; which ever will result from the evacuation of
bad passions, from the composure of such as are in-
different, from the excitement of those which are
Gal. v. 22. good and pleasant : *The fruits of the Spirit*, saith
Eph. v. 12. St. Paul, *are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentle-
ness, goodness*, (or benignity :) love precedeth, joy
Col. iii. 12. and peace follow as its *constant attendants, gen-
tleness and benignity come after as its certain
effects.
• Eldest daughter.

Love indeed is the sweetest of all passions, ever
accompanied with a secret delectation and pleasant
sense ; whenever it is placed upon a good object,
when it acteth in a rational way, when it is vigorous,
it must needs yield much joy.

It therefore greatly conduceth to our happiness,
or rather alone doth suffice to constitute us happy.

VIII. (3.) Charity will preserve us from divers ex-
ternal mischiefs and inconveniences, to which our
life is exposed, and which otherwise we shall in-
cur.

If we have not charity towards men, we shall have
enmity with them ; and upon that do wait troops of
mischief : we shall enjoy nothing quietly or safely,
we shall do nothing without opposition or conten-
tion ; no conversation, no commerce will be pleasant ;
clamour, obloquy, tumult, and trouble will surround
us ; we shall live in perpetual danger, the enmity
of the meanest and weakest creature being formid-
able.

But all such mischiefs charity will prevent or re-
move ; damming up the fountains, or extirpating the

roots of them : for who will hate a person that apparently loveth him ? who can be so barbarous or base as to hurt that man, whom he findeth ever ready to do himself good? what brute, what devil can find in his heart to be a foe to him who is a sure friend to all^f? No publican can be so wretchedly vile, no sinner so destitute of goodness ; for, *If*, saith Matt. v. 46. our Lord, upon common experience, *ye love them which love you, what reward have ye ; do not even the publicans the same?* and, *If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye ? for sinners also do even the same :* it seemeth beyond the greatest degeneracy and corruption whereof human nature is capable, to requite charity with enmity, yea not to return some kindness for it : *Tίς* ^{i Pet. iii.} *οὐ κακώσων ; Who, saith St. Peter, is he that will do* ^{13.} *you hurt, if ye be followers of that which is good ;* or imitators of him that is good, (of the sovereign goodness?) none surely can be so unjust or so unworthy.

As charity restraineth us from doing any wrong, or yielding any offence to others in thought, in word, in deed; from entertaining any bad conceits without ground, from hatching any mischievous designs against our neighbour; from using any harsh, virulent, biting language; from any rugged, discourteous, disobliging behaviour; from any wrongful, rigorous, severe dealing toward him; from any contemptuous pride, or supercilious arrogance : so it consequently

^f Τίς δ' ἀν καὶ ἔχθρὸς εὐλόγως γένοιτο ἀνδρὸς οὐδὲ μίαν οὐδαμῶς παρέχοντος αἰτίαν ἔχθρας ; Clem. Str. vii. p. 532.

Chrys. in 1 Thess. Or. iv. Καὶ θηρίον ἐκεῖνος ἦ, καὶ λίθος, &c.

Οὐδεὶς ἔχθρὸς τῷ σπουδαιῷ. Hier.

Οὐκ οὐρτε τὸν ἀγαπάμενον μὴ καὶ ἀγαπᾶν. Chrys. in Gen. Or. xxxii.

SERM. will defend us from the like treatment; for scarce
XXVIII. any man is so malicious as without any provocation
 Vincit ma- to do mischief; no man is so incorrigibly savage, as
 los perti- to persist in committing outrage upon perfect inno-
 nax boni- ncence, joined with patience, with meekness, with
 tas. *Sen.* courtesy: charity will melt the hardest heart, and
 charm the fiercest spirit; it will bind the most vio-
 lent hand, it will still the most obstreperous tongue;
 it will reconcile the most offended, most prejudiced
 heart: it is the best guard that can be of our safety
 from assaults, of our interest from damage, of our re-
 putation from slander, detraction, and reproach^s.

If you would have examples of this, experience
 will afford many; and some we have in the sacred
 Gen. xxxii. records commended to our observation: Esau was a
 20. rough man, and one who had been exceedingly pro-
 voked by his brother Jacob; yet how did meek and
 Gen. xxxiii. respectful demeanour overcome him! so that *Esau*,
 4. it is said in the history, *ran to meet him*, (Jacob,)
and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

Saul was a man possessed with a furious envy and
 spite against David; yet into what expressions did
 1Sam. xxiv. the sense of his kind dealing force him! *Is this thy*
 16, 17. *voice, my son David?—Thou art more righteous*
 xxvi. 17. *than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas*
 21. *I have rewarded thee evil:—behold I have played*
the fool, and have erred exceedingly. So doth char-
 ity subdue and triumph over the most inveterate
 prejudices, and the most violent passions of men.

^s Carbones ignis congregabis super caput ejus; non in male-
 dictum et condemnationem, ut plerique existimant, sed in cor-
 rectionem et penititudinem; ut superatus beneficiis, excoctus fer-
 vore charitatis, inimicus esse desistat. *Hier. in Pelag. i. cap. 9.*

If peace and quiet be desirable things, as certainly S E R M. they are, and that form implieth, when by wishing XXVIII. peace with men, we are understood to wish all good Cedit sta-
to them; it is charity only that preserveth them: tas ab alte-
which more surely than any power or policy doth ^{tim simul-}
quash all war and strife; for war must have parties, ^{ra parte de-}
and strife implieth resistance: be it the first or se-
cond blow which maketh the fray, charity will avoid
it; for it neither will strike the first in offence, nor
the second in revenge. Charity therefore may well
be styled *the bond of peace*, it being that only which ^{Eph. iv. 3.}
can knit men's souls together, and keep them from
breaking out into dissensions.

It alone is that which will prevent bickering and clashing about points of credit or interest: if we love not our neighbour, or tender not his good as our own, we shall be ever in competition and debate with him about those things, not suffering him to enjoy any thing quietly; struggling to get above him, scrambling with him for what is to be had.

IX. (4.) As charity preserveth from mischiefs, so it procureth many sweet comforts and fair accommo-
dations of life.

Friendship is a most useful and pleasant thing, Ego tibi and charity will conciliate good store thereof: it is amatorium monstrabo apt to make all men friends; for love is the only sine medi- general philter and effectual charm of souls; the fire camento, which kindleth all it toucheth, and propagateth itself sine herba, in every capable subject: and such a subject is every sine ullius man in whom humanity is not quite extinct; and beneficæ hardly can any such man be, seeing every man hath carmine, Si vis a- some good humour in him, some blood, some kindly mari, ama. juice flowing in his veins; no man wholly doth con- *Sen. Ep. ix.*

SERM. sist of dusky melancholy, or fiery choler; whence all
XXVIII. men may be presumed liable to the powerful im-
 pressions of charity: its mild and serene counte-
 nance, its sweet and gentle speech, its courteous
 and obliging gesture, its fair dealing, its benign con-
 versation, its readiness to do any good or service to
 any man, will insinuate good-will and respect into
 all hearts.

It thence will encompass a man with friends, with
 many guards of his safety, with many supports of
 his fortune, with many patrons of his reputation,
 with many succourers of his necessity, with many
 comforters of his affliction: for is a charitable man
 in danger, who will not defend him? is he falling,
 who will not uphold him? is he falsely accused or
 aspersed, who will not vindicate him? is he in dis-
 tress, who will not pity him? who will not en-
 deavour to relieve and restore him? who will insult
 over his calamity? will it not in such cases appear
 a common duty, a common interest to assist and
 countenance a common friend, a common benefactor
 to mankind?

Whereas most of our life is spent in society and
 discourse, charity is that which doth season and
 sweeten these, rendering them grateful to others,
 and commodious to one's self: for a charitable heart

Prov.xv.26. xvi. 24. is a sweet spring, from whence do issue streams of
 wholesome and pleasant discourse; it not being
 troubled with any bad passion or design, which may
 sour or foul conversation, doth ever make him good
 company to others, and rendereth them such to him-
 self; which is a mighty convenience. In short, *a*
 charitable man, or, *true lover of men, will*, saith St.
 Chrysostom, *inhabit earth as a heaven, every where*

carrying a serenity with him, and plaiting ten thousand crowns for himself^h. Again,

SERM.
XXVIII.

X. (5.) Charity doth in every estate yield advantages suitable thereto ; bettering it, and improving it to our benefit.

It rendereth prosperity not only innocent and safe, but useful and fruitful to us ; we then indeed enjoy it, if we feel the comfort of doing good by it : it so-laceth adversity, considering that it doth not arise as a punishment or fruit of ill-doing to others ; that it is not attended with the deserved ill-will of men ; that no man hath reason to delight for it, or insult over us therein ; that we may probably expect commiseration and relief, having been ready to shew the like to others.

It tempereth both states : for in prosperity a man cannot be transported with immoderate joy, when so many objects of pity and grief do present themselves before him, which he is apt deeply to resent ; in adversity he cannot be dejected with extreme sorrow, being refreshed by so many good successes be-falling those whom he loveth : one condition will not puff him up, being sensible of his neighbour's misery ; the other will not sink him down, having complacence in his neighbour's welfare. Uncharitableness (proceeding from contrary causes, and producing contrary effects) doth spoil all conditions, rendering prosperity fruitless, and adversity comfortless.

XI. (6.) We may consider, that secluding the exercise of charity, all the goods and advantages we

^h Τὴν γῆν οὐτας ὡς τὸν οὐρανὸν οἰκήσει, πανταχοῦ γαλήνης ἀπολαύων, καὶ μυρίους ἔσιται πλέκων στεφάνους. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. xxxii.

SER M. have (our best faculties of nature, our best endowments of soul, the gifts of Providence, and the fruits of our industry) will become vain and fruitless, or noxious and baneful to us; for what is our reason worth, what doth it signify, if it serveth only for contriving sorry designs, or transacting petty affairs about ourselves? what is wit good for, if it must be spent only in making sport, or hatching mischief? to what purpose is knowledge, if it be not applied to the instruction, direction, admonition, or consolation of others? what mattereth abundance of wealth, if it be to be uselessly hoarded up, or vainly flung away in wicked or wanton profuseness; if it be not employed in affording succour to our neighbour's indigency and distress? what is our credit but a mere noise or a puff of air, if we do not give a solidity and substance to it, by making it an engine of doing

Paulum se-
pultæ distat
inertiae Ce-
lata virtus.
Hor.Carm.
iv. 9. good? what is our virtue itself, if it be buried in obscurity or choked with idleness, yielding no benefit to others by the lustre of its example, or by its real influence? what is any talent, if it be wrapped up in a napkin; any light, if it be hid under a bushel; any thing private, if it be not by good use spread out and improved to public benefit? If these gifts do minister only to our own particular advantage, to our personal convenience, glory, or pleasure, how slim things are they, how inconsiderable is their worth!

But they being managed by charity become precious and excellent things; they are great in proportion to the greatness of their use, or the extent of their beneficial influence: as they carry forth good to the world, so they bring back various benefits to ourselves; they return into our bosom laden

with respect and reward from God and from man ; SERM. they yield thanks and commendation from without, XXVIII. they work comfort and satisfaction within : yea, which is infinitely more considerable, and enhanceth the price of our gifts to a vast rate, they procure glory and blessing to God ; for *hereby is God glorified, if we bring forth much fruit* : and no good fruit can grow from any other stock than that of charity.

John xv. 8.
Phil. i. 11.
Matt. v. 16.
Prov. iv. 31.
2Cor. ix. 11.
1 Cor. xiii.

Uncharitableness therefore should be loathed and shunned by us, as that which robbeth us of all our ornaments and advantages ; which indeed marreth and corrupteth all our good things ; which turneth blessings into curses, and rendereth the means of our welfare to be causes of mischief to us : for without charity a man can have no goods, but goods worldly and temporal ; and such goods thence do prove impertinent baubles, burdensome encumbrances, dangerous snares, baneful poisons to him.

XII. (7.) Charity doth hugely advance and amplify a man's state, putting him into the possession or fruition of all good things : it will endow, enrich, ennable, embellish us with all the world hath of precious, of glorious, of fair ; by appropriation thereof to ourselves, and acquiring of a real interest therein. What men commonly out of fond self-love do vainly affect, that infallibly by being charitable they may compass, the engrossing to themselves all kinds of good : most easily, most innocently, in a compendious and sure way, without any sin or blame, without any care or pain, without any danger or trouble, they may come to attain and to enjoy whatever in common esteem is desirable or valuable ; they may, without greedy avarice, or the carkings, the drudge-

SERM. ries, the disgraces going with it, procure to them-
XXVIII. selves abundant wealth ; without fond ambition, or
the difficulties, the hazards, the emulations, the
strugglings to which it is liable, they may arrive to
great honour ; without sordid voluptuousness, or the
satieties, the maladies, the regrets consequent there-
on, they may enjoy all pleasure ; without any wild-
ness or wantonness, pride, luxury, sloth, any of its
temptations and snares, they may have all prosperity ;
they may get all learning and wisdom without labo-
rious study, all virtue and goodness without the fa-
tigues of continual exercise : for are not all these
things yours, if you do esteem them so, if you do
make them so by finding much delight and satisfac-
tion in them ? doth not your neighbour's wealth en-
rich you, if you feel content in his possessing and
using it ? doth not his preferment advance you, if
your spirit riseth with it in a gladsome complacence ?
doth not his pleasure delight you, if you relish his
enjoyment of it ? doth not his prosperity bless you,
if your heart doth exult and triumph in it ? do not
his endowments adorn you, if you like them, if you
commend them, if the use of them doth minister
comfort and joy to you ? This is the divine magic
of charity, which conveyeth all things into our hands,
and instateth us in a dominion of them, whereof
nothing can disseize us ; by virtue whereof *being*,

^{2Cor.vi.10.} as St. Paul speaketh of himself, *sorrowful, we yet always rejoice ; having nothing, we yet possess all things.*

Neither is this property in things merely imaginary
or fantastic, (like that of lunatics, who fancy them-
selves mighty princes or rich aldermen,) but very
substantial and real ; yea, far more real to the cha-

ritable person, than it is commonly to those, who in S.E.R.M. legal or popular account are masters of them : for XXVIII. how is propriety in things otherwise considerable, than for the content and pleasure which they yield to the presumed owner ? the which if a charitable person abundantly draweth from them, why are they not truly his ? why is not the tree his, if he can pull and taste its fruits without injury or blame ? yea doth not the propriety more really belong to him as to the gross possessor, if he doth equally enjoy the benefit, without partaking the inconveniences and impurities adherent to them ; if he taste them innocently and purely, without being cloyed, without being distracted, without being puffed, without being encumbered, ensnared, or corrupted by them ?

A charitable man therefore can never, in a moral account, be poor, or vile, or anywise miserable ; except all the world should be cast into penury and distress : for while his neighbour hath any thing, he will enjoy it ; *rejoicing with those that rejoice*, as the apostle doth enjoin.

XIII. (8.) If therefore we love ourselves, we must love others, and do others good ; charitable beneficence carrying with it so many advantages to ourselves.

We by charitable complacence do partake in their welfare, reaping pleasure from all the fruits of their industry and fortune.

We by charitable assistance do enable and dispose them to make grateful returns of succour in our need.

We thence assuredly shall obtain their good-will, their esteem, their commendation ; we shall maintain peaceable and comfortable intercourse with them, in safety, in quiet, in good humour and cheer.

SER.M. Besides all other benefits we shall get that of their
XXVIII. <sup>James v. 4.
Deut. xxiv.
15.
Ecclius.iv.6.</sup> prayers ; the which of all prayers have a most favour-
able audience and assured efficacy : for if the com-
plaints and curses of those who are oppressed or neg-
lected by uncharitable dealing do certainly reach
God's ears, and pull down vengeance from above ;
how much more will the intercessions and blessings
of the poor pierce the heavens, and thence draw re-
compense ! seeing God is more ready to perform his
proper and pleasant works of bounty and mercy, than

<sup>Paul. lxiii.
12.
Mic. 7. 18.
Isa. xxviii.
21.</sup> to execute his *strange* and unpleasing *work of*
punishment ; especially the blessings of the poor being
always accompanied with praises and glorifications
of him, who enableth and disposeth men to do good ;
the which praises will ever be reckoned on the ac-
count of him who drew them forth by his beneficence :
Phil. iv. 17. it will be, as the apostle saith, *fruit redounding to*
^{2 Cor. ix.} *his account*, while *it aboundeth by many thanks-*
givings to God.

So in virtue of charity the poorest man amply
may requite the wealthiest ; and a peasant may outdo
the greatest prince in beneficence.

XIV. We may consider, that charity is a practice
specially grateful to God, and a most excellent part
of our duty ; not only because he hath commanded
it as such with greatest earnestness ; nor only be-
cause it doth constitute us in nearest resemblance of
him ; but as a peculiar expression of love and good-
will toward him : for if we love him, we must for
his sake have a kindness for his friends, we must
tender his interests, we must favour his reputation, we
must desire his content and pleasure, we must contri-
bute our endeavours toward the furtherance of these
his concerns. Seeing then God is an assured friend to

all men, seeing he hath a property in all men, (for SERM. he is God and Lord of all,) seeing he much con- XXVIII.
cerneth himself for all men's welfare ; seeing from the prosperity, from the virtue, from the happiness of every man he gaineth honour and praise ; seeing Ezek. xviii. he is greatly satisfied and delighted in the good of men ; we also must love them ; otherwise we greatly shall disoblige and disgust him.

Is it not indeed a practice guilty of notorious enmity toward him, inconsistent with the maintenance of any friendship or peace with him, to discord in affection from him, maligning or disaffecting those whom he dearly loveth and favoureth ; who are so nearly allied to him by manifold relations, as his creatures, his subjects, his servants, his children, whom he designeth and desireth to crown with eternal glory and blissⁱ?

XV. Seeing God vouchsafeth to esteem whatever is done in charity to our neighbour (if done with an honest and pious mind, as to his friends) to be done unto himself ; that in feeding our indigent neighbour we refresh him ; in clothing our neighbour we comfort him ; we do by charitable beneficence oblige God, and become in a manner benefactors to him ; and as such assuredly shall be requited by him : and is not this a high privilege, a great honour, a mighty advantage to us ? If a man had opportunity to do that, which his prince would acknowledge a courtesy and obligation to him, what a happiness would he account it ! and how far more considerable is it, that we can so easily do that which the Lord of all, in whose

ⁱ Ὅταν στυγῇ τις ἄνδρα, τὸν Θεὸν φίλεῖ, οὗτος μεγίστην μωρίαν κατεισάγει, φανερῶς γὰρ αὐτῷ τῷ Θεῷ κορύσσεται. Vid. Anthol.

Δεῖ γὰρ φίλειν ἐκεῖνον, ὃν Θεός φίλεῖ. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. xxxii.

100 *Motives and Arguments to Charity.*

SERM. disposal all things are, will take so kindly at our
XXVIII. hands!

XVI. We may consider, that charity is a very feasible and very easy duty; it requireth no sore pain, no grievous trouble, no great cost: for it consisteth only in good-will, and that which naturally springeth thence; willingness and cheerfulness are necessary ingredients or adjuncts of it; the which imply facility^k: whence the weakest and poorest man is no less able to perform it than the greatest potentate; his heart may be as charitable, though his hand cannot be so liberal: one of the most noble and most famous charities that ever was, was the giving two mites; and the *giving a cup of cold water* is the instance of that beneficence, which shall not fail of being rewarded^l.

XVII. We may consider that charity is the best, the most assured, the most easy and expedite way or instrument of performing all other duties toward our neighbour: if we would despatch, love, and all is done; if we would be perfect in obedience, love, and we shall not fail in any point; for *love is the fulfilling of the law*; *love is the bond of perfectness*: would we be secure in the practice of justice, of meekness, of humility toward all men, of constant fidelity toward our friends, of gentle moderation to-

^k Ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη μετὰ τοῦ κέρδους πολλὴν ἔχει καὶ τὴν ἡδονὴν, καὶ τὸν αἰδένα. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. xxii.

^l Ποῖος τόνος μὴ κακὸς εἴτεν οὐδένα; ποία δυσκολία ἀταλλαγῆναι φθόνον καὶ βασκανίας; ποῖος μύθος μὴ κακὸς εἴτεν μηδένα; Chrys. Ἀδρ. ᷄.

¹ At nunc cum omnia quæ difficiliora sunt vel modica ex parte faciamus, hoc solum non facimus quod et factu facilis est, et absque quo cassa sunt universa quæ facimus: jejunii corpus sentit injuriam, vigilæ carnem macerant—hæc omnia sunt qui faciant, sola charitas sine labore est. Hier. in Gal. v. 13.

ward our enemies, of loyalty toward our superiors, of SERM. benignity toward our inferiors; if we would be sure XXVIII. to purify our minds from ill thoughts, to restrain our tongues from ill speaking, to abstain from all bad demeanour and dealing; it is but having charity, and infallibly you will do all this: for *love worketh no Rom. xii. ill to its neighbour; love thinketh no evil; love be-*^{1 Cor. xiii.}_{5.} *haveth not itself unseemly.*

Would we discharge all our duties without any reluctance or regret, with much satisfaction and pleasure? love will certainly dispose us thereto; for it always acteth freely and cheerfully, without It is any compulsion or straining; it is ever accompanied ^{winged.} It is fire. with delectation ^m: if we would know its way and virtue of acting, we may see it represented in the proceeding of Jacob, who being inspired by love did contentedly and without regret endure so long and hard toil, such disappointments and such affronts: *And Jacob, saith the text, served seven years for Gen. xxix. Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days^{20.} for the love he had to her.*

This is the root, from whence voluntary obedience doth naturally grow; if it be planted in our heart, we need not fear but that all kind of good fruit will sprout forth into conversation and practice ⁿ.

But without it we shall not ever perform any good work perfectly, steadily, in a kindly manner: no other principle will serve; if we are only moved

^m Εἰ γὰρ ἀκατέεις ἡγάπαν καὶ ἡγαπᾶντο, οὐδὲν ἀν ηδίκησεν αἰδεῖς, &c.
Chrys. in Cor. Or. xxxii.

Amor obsequitur sponte, gratis obtemperat, libere reveretur.
Bern. ad Eug. Prol. Vid. Bern. Ep. xi. p. 1404.

ⁿ Ο γὰρ φιλῶν οὐχ οὕτως ἐπιτάσσων, ὡς ἐπιταπτόμενος χαίρει, &c.
Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. xxxii.

SERM. by whip and spur, driven on by fear, or incited by
XXVIII. hope, we shall go forward unwillingly and dully,
often halting, ever flagging : those principles which
do put slaves and mercenaries on action, as they are
not so noble and worthy, so neither are they so ef-
fectual and sure ; as ambition, vain-glory, self-in-
terest, design of security, of profit, of compliance
with the expectation of men, &c.

Chrys. in
1 Cor. Or.
xxv.

XVIII. Charity giveth worth, form, and life to
all virtue, so that without it no action is valuable in
itself, or acceptable to God.

Sever it from courage ; and what is that, but the
boldness or fierceness of a beast ? from meekness ;
and what is that, but the softness of a woman, or
weakness of a child ? from courtesy ; and what is
that, but affectation or artifice ? from justice ; what
is that, but humour or policy ? from wisdom ; what
is that, but craft and subtlety ?

What meaneth faith without it, but dry opinion ;
what hope, but blind presumption ; what alms-doing,
but ambitious ostentation ; what undergoing mar-
tyrdom, but stiffness or sturdiness of resolution ;
what is devotion, but glozing or mocking with God ?
what is any practice, how specious soever in ap-
pearance, or materially good, but an issue of self-
conceit or self-will, of servile fear or mercenary de-
sign ? *Though I have faith, so that I could re-
move mountains, and have not charity, I am no-
thing ; though I bestow all my goods to feed the
poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and
have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

1 Cor. xiii.
2, 3.

But charity doth sanctify every action, and im-
pregnate all our practice with a savour of goodness,
turning all we do into virtue ; it is true fortitude

and gallantry indeed, when a man out of charity ^{SER M.} and hearty design to promote his neighbour's XXVIII. good doth encounter dangers and difficulties ; it is genuine meekness, when a man out of charity, and unwillingness to hurt his neighbour, doth patiently comport with injuries and discourtesies ; it is virtuous courtesy, when cordial affection venteth itself in civil language, in respectful deportment, in obliging performances ; it is excellent justice, when a man, regarding his neighbour's case as his own, doth unto him as he would have it done to himself ; it is admirable wisdom, which sagaciously contriveth and dexterously manageth things with the best advantage toward its neighbour's good : it is a worthy faith, which being *spirited* and *actuated* by charity, ^{Gal. v. 6.} doth produce goodly fruits of beneficence ; it is a ^{James ii. 26.} sound and solid hope, which is grounded on that everlasting foundation of charity, which *never doth* ^{1 Cor. iii. 8.} fail, or fall away ; it is sincere alms, which not only the hand, but the heart doth reach forth ; it is an acceptable sacrifice, which is kindled by the holy fire of fervent affection ; it is a pure devotion, which ^{1 Tim. ii. 8.} Matt. v. 23. is offered up with a calm and benign mind, resembling the disposition of that goodness which it ador- eth.

If therefore we would do any thing well, if we would not lose all the virtue, and forfeit all the benefit of what we perform, we must follow the rule of St. Paul, *to do all our works in charity.*

¹ Cor. xvi.
14.

XIX. So great benefits doth charity yield ; yet if it did not yield any of them, it would deserve and claim our observance ; without regard to its sweet fruits and beneficial consequences, it were to be embraced and cherished ; for it carrieth a reward and

SERM. a heaven in itself; the very same which constituteth
XXVIII. God himself infinitely happy, and which beatifieth
every blessed spirit, in proportion to its capacity
and exercise thereof: a man doth abundantly enjoy
himself in that steady composedness, and savoury
complacence of mind, which ever doth attend it;
and as the present sense, so is the memory of it, or
the good conscience of having done good, very de-
licious and satisfactory.

As it is a rascally delight (tempered with regret,
and vanishing into bitterness) which men feel in
wreaking spite, or doing mischief; such as they
cannot reflect upon without disgust and condemning
their base impotency of soul: so is the pleasure
which charity doth breed altogether pure, grateful to
the mind, and increasing by reflection; never pe-
rishing or decaying; a man eternally enjoying the
good he hath done, by remembering and ruminating
thereon. In fine,

XX. Whereas the great obstacle to charity is self-
love, or an extravagant fondness of our own in-
terests, yet uncharitableness destroyeth that: for
how can we love ourselves, if we do want charity?
how can we appear lovely to ourselves, if we are
destitute of so worthy an endowment? or if we can
discern those unworthy dispositions, which accom-
pany the defect of it; can we esteem so mean, so
vile, so ugly things as we then are? Aristotle saith,
that bad men cannot be friends to themselves, be-
cause *having in themselves nothing amiable, they
can feel no affection toward themselves*; and cer-
tainly, if we are not stark blind, or can but see
wrath, spite, envy, revenge in their own black and
ugly hue, we must needs (if they do possess our souls)

οὐδὲ φιλητοὶ,
τὸν ἴχνον,
οὐδὲ φιλητοὶ
πάσχουσι.
Arist. Eth.
ix. 4.

grow odious and despicable to ourselves. And being SERM.
they do rob us of so many great benefits, and bring XXVIII.
so many grievous mischiefs on us, we cannot be
otherwise than enemies to ourselves by cherishing
them, or suffering them to lodge in us.

These are some very considerable inducements to
the practice of this great virtue ; there are divers
others of a higher nature, derivable from the inmost
bowels of our religion, grounded on its peculiar con-
stitution and obligations, which I shall now forbear
to mention, reserving them for a particular discourse
by themselves.

*O Lord, who hast taught us, that all our doings Quinquag.
without charity are nothing worth ; send thy Holy Sund.
Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excel-
lent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of
all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is
counted dead before thee. Grant this for thine
only Son Jesus Christ's sake.*

S E R M O N XXIX.

OF A PEACEABLE TEMPER AND CARRIAGE.

ROM. xii. 18.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

SERM. XXIX. THIS chapter containeth many excellent precepts and wholesome advices, (scarce any portion of holy scripture so many in so little compass.) From among them I have selected one, alas, but too seasonable and pertinent to the unhappy condition of our distracted age, wherein to observe this and such like injunctions, is by many esteemed an impossibility, by others a wonder, by some a crime. It hath an apt coherence with, yet no necessary dependence upon, the parts adjoining; whence I may presume to treat upon it distinctly by itself: and without further preface or circumstance we may consider several particulars therein.

I. And first, concerning the advice itself, or the substance of the duty charged on us, *εἰρηνεύειν*, (*to be in peace, or live peaceably,*) we may take notice, that whether, according to the more usual acception, it be applied to the public estate of things, or, as here, doth relate only to private conversation, it doth import,

1. Not barely a negation of doing, or suffering harm, or an abstinence from strife and violence, (for

a mere strangeness this may be, a want of occasion, SERM. or a truce, rather than a peace,) but a positive XXIX. amity, and disposition to perform such kind offices, without which good correspondence among men cannot subsist. For they who by reason of distance of place, non-acquaintance, or defect of opportunity, maintain no intercourse, cannot properly be said to be in peace with one another: but those who have frequent occasion of commerce, whose conditions require interchanges of courtesy and relief, who are some way obliged and disposed to afford needful succour, and safe retreat to each other; these may be said to live in peace together, and these only, it being in a manner impossible, that they who are not disposed to do good to others (if they have power and opportunity) should long abstain from doing harm.

2. Living peaceably implies not some few transitory performances, proceeding from casual humour, or the like; but a constant, stable, and well-settled condition of being; a continual cessation from injury, and promptitude to do good offices. For as one blow doth not make a battle, nor one skirmish a war; so cannot single forbearances from doing mischief, or some few particular acts of kindness, (such as mere strangers may afford each other,) be worthily styled a being in peace; but an habitual inclination to these, a firm and durable estate of innocence and beneficence.

3. Living in peace supposes a reciprocal condition of being: not only a performing good, and forbearing to do bad offices, but a receiving the like treatment from others. For he, that being assaulted is constrained to stand upon his defence, may not be

SERM. said to be in peace, though his not being so (involuntarily) is not to be imputed to him.

4. Being in peace imports not only an outward cessation of violence and seeming demonstration of amity, but an inward will and resolution to continue therein. For he that intends, when occasion is presented, to do mischief to another, is nevertheless an enemy, because more secret and dangerous: an ambuscado is no less a piece of war, than confronting the enemy in open field. Proclaiming and denouncing signify, but good and ill intention constitute, and are the souls of peace and war. From these considerations we may infer a description of being in peace, viz. that it is, to bear mutual goodwill, to continue in amity, to maintain good correspondence, to be upon terms of mutual courtesy and benevolence; to be disposed to perform reciprocally all offices of humanity; assistance in need, comfort in sorrow, relief in distress; to please and satisfy one another, by advancing the innocent delight, and promoting the just advantage of each other; to converse with confidence and security, without suspicion, on either hand, of any fraudulent, malicious, or hurtful practices against either: or, negatively, not to be in a state of enmity, personal hatred, pertinacious anger, jealousy, envy, or ill-will; not to be apt to provoke, to reproach, to harm or hinder another, nor to have reasonable grounds of expecting the same bad usage from others; to be removed from danger of vexatious quarrels, intercourse of odious language, offending others, or being disquieted one's self. This I take to be the meaning of living or being in peace, differing only in degree of obligation, and latitude of object, from the

state of friendship properly so called, and opposed to SERM. a condition of enmity, defiance, contention, hatred, suspicion, animosity.

II. In the next place we may consider the object of this duty, signified in those words, *With all men.* We often meet in scripture with exhortations directed peculiarly to Christians, to be at peace among themselves; as Mark ix. 5. our Saviour lays this injunction upon his disciples, *εἰρηνεύετε ἐν ἀλλήλαις,* *Have peace one with another;* inculcated by St. Paul ^{1 Thess. v.} upon the Thessalonians in the same words: and the ^{13.} like we have in the second Epistle to Timothy, chap. ii. ver. 22. *Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart:* and to the Romans, (xiv. 19.) *Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.* But here the duty hath a more large and comprehensive object; *πάντες ἄθρωποι, all men:* as likewise it hath in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. xii. ver. 14. *Pursue peace with all men:* with all men, without any exception, with men of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and Barbarians; of all sects and religions; persecuting Jews and idolatrous heathens; (for of such consisted the generality of men at that time;) and so St. Paul expressly in a like advice, (1 Cor. x. 32, 33. *Give no offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; even as I please all men.*) And I may add, by evident parity of reason, with men of all degrees and estates, high and low, noble and base, rich and poor; of all tempers and dispositions, meek and angry, gentle and foward, pliable and perverse; of all endowments, wise and foolish, vir-

^{Vid. Eph.}
^{iv. 3.}

SERM. tuous and vicious; of all judgments and persuasions,
XXIX. orthodox and heretical, peaceable and schismatical persons: this universally vast and boundless term, *all men*, contains them all. Neither is there any evading our obligation to this duty, by pretending about others, that they differ from us in humour and complexion of soul, that they entertain opinions irreconcileably contrary to ours; that they adhere to sects and parties which we dislike and disavow; that they are not so virtuous, so religious, so holy as they should be, or at least not in such a manner as we would have them: for be this allegation true or false, it will not excuse us; while they are not divested of human nature, and can truly lay claim to the name and title of men, we are by virtue of this precept obliged to live peaceably with them.

III. We may consider the qualification of the duty here expressed, and what those words mean; *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you.* To which purpose we may advert, from our description of living peaceably, that it consists mainly of two parts: one *active*, or proceeding from us, and terminated on others—to bear good-will, to do good offices, to procure the profit, delight, and welfare, to abstain from the displeasure, damage, and disturbance of others: the other *passive*, issuing from others, and terminated on ourselves—that they be well affected toward us, inclinable to do us good, and nowise disposed to wish, design, or bring any harm, trouble, or vexation upon us. Whereof the former is altogether in our power, consisting of acts or omissions depending upon our free choice and counsel: and we are directly obliged to it, by virtue of those words, τὸ ἐξ ἑμῶν, *as much as lieth in you:* the lat-

ter is not fully so, yet commonly there be probable means of effecting it, which we are hence bound to use, though sometimes they may fail of success. For the words *εἰ δύνατον, if it be possible,* as they signify the utmost endeavour is to be employed, and that no difficulty (beneath the degree of impossibility) can discharge us from it; so they intimate plainly, that sometime our labour may be lost, and our purpose defeated; and that by the default of others it may be impossible we should arrive to a peaceable condition of life with all men. However, by this rule we are directed not only ourselves not to infringe the terms of peace toward others, but to endeavour earnestly by all honest and prudent means to obtain the good-will, favour, and respect of others, by which they may be disposed to all friendly correspondence with us, and not to disturb the quiet and tranquillity of our lives.

Having thus by way of explication superficially glanced upon the words, we will proceed to a more large and punctual review of them; and shall consider more distinctly the particulars grossly mentioned: and,

I. What those especial duties are, included in this more comprehensive one of living peaceably with all men; both those which are directly required of us, as the necessary causes or immediate results of a peaceable disposition in us toward others; and also those which are to be performed by us, as just and reasonable means conduicible to beget or preserve in others a peaceable inclination toward us: these I shall consider promiscuously: and,

1. We are by this precept directly obliged heartily to love, that is, to bear good-will to, to wish well to,

SERM. to rejoice in the welfare, and commiserate the adver-
XXIX. sities of all men : at least not to hate, or bear ill-will
 to, to desire or design the harm, to repine at the
 happy success, or delight in the misfortunes of any :
 for as it is very hard to maintain peace and amicable
 correspondence with those we do not truly love ; so
 it is absolutely impossible to do it long with those
 we hate : this satanic passion (or disposition of soul)
 always prompting the mind possessed therewith to
 the contrivance and execution of mischief ; whence
1 John iii. 15.
 he that hates his brother is said to be a murderer, as
 having in him that bitter root, from whence, if power
 and occasion conspire, will probably spring that most
 extreme of outrages, and capital breach of peace.
 Love is the only sure cement, that knits and com-
 bines men in friendly society ; and hatred, the cer-
 tain fountain of that violence, which rends and dis-
 solves it. We cannot easily hurt or strive with those
 we love and wish well to : we cannot possibly long
 agree with those we hate and malign. Peace with-
 out love can be esteemed little more than politic dis-
 simulation ; and peace with hatred is really nothing
 less than an artificial disguise, or an insidious covert
 of enmity.

2. We are hence obliged to perform all kind offices
 of humanity, which the condition of any man can re-
 quire, and may by us be performed without consider-
 able inconvenience or detriment to ourselves or others.
 When, for the preservation or comfortable accom-
 modation of life, they need our help or our advice,
 we are readily to afford them ; when they are in
 want or distress, we are to minister to them what
 comfort and relief we can. We are, upon this very
 score, to obey that injunction of St. Paul to the Ga-

latians, *As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men.* For without this beneficence a man's carriage (though otherwise harmless and inoffensive) appears rather a suspicious strangeness, than a peaceable demeanour, and naturally produces an enmity in those that are concerned in it. For he to whom, being pressed with necessity, requisite assistance is denied, will infallibly be apt to think himself not only neglected and disesteemed, but affronted also and injured ; (need, in the general conceit of men, and especially of those that feel it, begetteth a kind of title to some competent relief;) and consequently will heinously resent, and complain bitterly of such supposed wrong, and, if ever he become able, repay it with advantage. And much more are we upon the same account not to perform ill offices toward any man ; not to disturb him in the enjoyment of his innocent pleasure, nor to hinder him in the advancing his lawful profit, nor to interrupt him in the prosecution of his reasonable designs; nor anywise to vex and grieve him needlessly ; and (above all) not to detain him in, nor to aggravate his affliction. For these are actual violations of peace, and impediments of good correspondence among men. Further,

3. In this duty of living peaceably is included an obligation to all kind of just and honest dealing with all men; punctually to observe contracts, impartially to decide controversies, equally to distribute rewards, to injure no man either in his estate, by violent or fraudulent encroachments upon his just possessions ; or in his reputation, by raising or dispersing slanderous reports concerning him : for these courses of all others are most destructive to peace, and upon

SERM. the pretence of them most quarrels that ever were
XXIX. have been commenced.

Justice in its own nature is, and by the common agreement of men hath been designed the guardian of peace and sovereign remedy of contention. But not to insist long upon such obvious subjects,

4. It much conduceth to the preservation of peace, and upholding amicable correspondence in our dealings and transactions with men, liable to doubt and debate, not to insist upon nice and rigorous points of right, not to take all advantage offered us, not to deal hard measure, not to use extremities, to the damage or hinderance of others, especially when no compar-

Vide Tit. iii. 2. *ἀρετῶν ἀποδεῖσθαι ταῦτα.* able benefit will thence accrue to ourselves: For such proceedings, as they discover in us little kindness to, or tenderness of our neighbour's good, so they exceedingly exasperate them, and persuade them we are their enemies, and render them ours, and so utterly destroy peace between us. Whenas abating something from the height and strictness of our pretences, and a favourable recession in such cases, will greatly engage men to have an honourable opinion, and a peaceable affection toward us.

5. If we would attain to this peaceable estate of life, we must use toward all men such demonstrations of respect and courtesy, which according to their degree and station custom doth entitle them to, or which upon the common score of humanity they may be reasonably deemed to expect from us; respective gestures, civil salutations, free access, affable demeanour, cheerful looks, and courteous discourse. These, as they betoken good-will in them that use them, so they beget, cherish, and increase it in those, whom they refer to: and the necessary

fruit of mutual good-will is peace. But the contrary carriages, contemptuous or disregardful behaviour, difficulty of admission to converse, a tetchical or sullen aspect, rough and fastidious language, as they discover a mind averse from friendly commerce, so they beget a more potent disdain in others: men generally (especially those of generous and hearty temper) valuing their due respect beyond all other interests, and more contentedly brooking injury than neglect. Whence this skill and dexterity of deportment (though immediately, and in its own nature, of no great worth, and regulating actions of small importance, gestures, looks, and forms of speech,) yet because it is a nurse of peace, and greatly contributes to the delightfulness of society, hath been always much commended, and hath obtained a conspicuous place in the honourable rank of virtues, under the titles of courtesy, comity, and affability; and the opposites thereto, rudeness and rusticity, have been deservedly counted and called vices in morality.

6. This precept directly prohibits the use of all reproachful, scornful, and provoking language; these being the immediate results of enmity, and actual breaches of peace. Whence St. Paul conjoins, Μηδένα Tit. iii. 2. βλασφημεῖν, and ἀμάχοις εἶναι, *To speak evil of no man, to be no quarrellers,* (or fighters,) *but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.* For war is managed (and that with more deadly animosity) with the tongue, as well as with the hand. (*There* Prov. xii. *is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword,* saith ^{18.} Psal. lvii. 4. Solomon; and *whose teeth are spears and arrows,* ^{lxiv. 3.} *and their tongue a sharp sword,* saith David.) Words are with more anguish felt than blows; their wounds are more incurable, and they leave a deeper

SERM. scar^a. Men usually dread more the loss of their honour than their lives, and take more grievously the ravishing of their credit than the depredation of their estate. Living peaceably therefore implies as much abstaining from opprobrious words as injurious actions; yea more; for reviling is not only a violation of peace, but a dishonourable waging of war; like shooting arrows dipt in poison, and discharging slugs against our neighbour's reputation^b: practices condemned by all as base and inhuman, and contrary to the laws of a noble warfare; being arguments, we affect rather our adversary's utter ruin, than a gallant victory over him. There be fair ways of disputing our cause, without contumelious reflections upon persons; and the errors of men may be sufficiently refuted without satirical virulence. One good reason modestly propounded hath in it naturally more power and efficacy to convince him that is in a mistake, or to confound him with shame that is guilty of a fault, than ten thousand scoffs and ignominious taunts.

Vid. egre-
gium Anto-
nini locum,
lib. xi.
§. 18. 9.
ἀδητας.

When we are to express those deeds of nature, (the performance of which is concealed, as containing in it something of supposed turpitude,) we are wont to veil them in such modest circumlocutions, that by the hearers without offence to their bashfulness may sufficiently be understood. So when it is needful or expedient to confute the opinions, or reprove the actions of men, if we either charitably design their amendment, or desire to maintain peaceable correspondence with them, it behoves that we do not by

^a Ποταπὸν δὲ χρῆμα λαίδορία; ὡς θυμοδακές ἀληθῶς, καὶ ἀμύττον ψυχὴν μᾶλλον ἢ σιδηρὸς χράτα. Jul. 2. Orat.

^b Ζῆλος γάρ συγγράμμης ἀπεστερημένος οὐ ζῆλος, ἀλλὰ θυμὸς μᾶλλον ἐστιν, καὶ νονθεσία φιλανθρωπίαν οὐκ ἔχουσα, βασκανία τις εἴναι δοκεῖ. Chrys. tom. v. p. 32.

using the most broad and distasteful language immo- SERM.
derately trespass upon their modesty and patience; XXIX.
that (to use Seneca's phrase) we do *agere curam*
non tantum salutis, sed et honestæ cicatricis. De
Clem. i. c. 17. *Have a care not only to cure the*
wound, but to leave a comely scar, and not to de-
form him, whom we endeavour to reform; for no
sore is the easilier cured for being roughly handled,
and least of all those in manners and opinion. A Prov. xv. 1.
soft hand, and a tender heart, and a gentle tongue,
are most convenient qualities of a spiritual chirur-
geon. But further to this purpose.

7. If we desire to live peaceably with all men, we are to be equal in censuring men's actions, candid in interpreting their meanings, mild in reprehending, and sparing to relate their miscarriages, to derive their actions from the best principles, (from which in the judgment of charity they may be supposed to proceed, as from casual mistake rather than from wilful prejudice, from human infirmity rather than from malicious design,) to construe ambiguous expressions to the most favourable sense they may admit; not to condemn men's practices without distinct knowledge of the case, and examining the reasons, which possibly may absolve or excuse them: to extenuate their acknowledged faults by such circumstances as aptly serve that purpose, and not to exaggerate them by strained consequences, or uncertain conjectures: to rebuke them (if need be) so as they may perceive we sincerely pity their errors, and tender their good, and wish nothing more than their recovery, and do Prov. xvii.^{9.} not design to upbraid, deride, or insult over them,
being fallen; and finally, not to recount their mis-
deeds over-frequently, unseasonably, and with com-

SERM. placence. He that thus demeaneth himself, mani-
XXIX. festly sheweth himself to prize his neighbour's good-
 will, and to be desirous to continue in amity with
 him; and assuredly obliges him to be in the same man-
 ner affected toward him. But he that is rigidly severe
 and censorious in his judgments, blaming in them
 things indifferent, condemning actions allowable, de-
 tracting from qualities commendable, deducing men's
 doings from the worst causes, and imputing them to
 the worst ends, and representing them under the
 most odious appellations; that calls all impositions
 of superiors which he dislikes, tyranny, and all man-
 ners of divine worship that suit not to his fancy,
 superstition, and all pretences to conscience in those
 that dissent from him, hypocrisy, and all opinions
 different from his, heresy; that is suspicious of ill
 intention without sufficient ground, and prejudiceth
 men's meanings before he well apprehends them, and
 captiously perverts sayings capable of good construc-
 tion; that is curiously inquisitive into his neighbour's
 life, and gladly observes failings therein, and upon
 all occasions recites stories to his disgrace and dis-
 advantage; that is immoderately bitter, fierce, and
 vehement in accusing and inveighing against others,
 painting such, as he assumes to impugn, with the
 blackest colours, in the most horrid shape and ugly
 dress, converting all matter of discourse(though never
 so unseasonably and impertinently) into declamation,
 and therein copiously expatiating: in fine, employing
 his utmost might of wit and eloquence and confidence
 in rendering that to others as hateful as he signifies
 they are to himself: such men, what do they else
 but loudly proclaim that they despise their neighbour's
 good-will, purposely provoke his anger, and defy his

That flies
like a vul-
ture to car-
tion only.
Plut.de Util.
cap.ex Inim.
Prov. xvii.
9. xxiv. 17.

utmost enmity? For it is impossible such dealing should not by them, who are therein concerned, be accounted extremely unjust, and to proceed from desperate hatred.

8. He that would effectually observe this apostolic rule, must be disposed to overlook such lesser faults committed against him, as make no great breach upon his interest or credit, yea to forget or forgive the greatest and most grievous injuries; to excuse the mistakes, and connive at the neglects, and bear patiently the hasty passions of his neighbour, and to embrace readily any seasonable overture, and accept any tolerable conditions of reconciliation^c. For even in common life that observation of our Saviour most exactly holds, *It is impossible that offences should not come*; the air may sooner become wholly fixed, and the sea continue in a perfect rest, without waves or undulations, than human conversation be altogether free from occasions of distaste, which he that cannot either prudently dissemble, or patiently digest, must renounce all hopes of living peaceably here. He that like tinder is inflammable by the least spark, and is enraged by every angry word, and resents deeply every petty affront, and cannot endure the memory of a past unkindness should upon any terms be defaced, resolves surely to live in eternal tumult and combustion, to multiply daily upon himself fresh quarrels, and to perpetuate all enmity already begun. Whenas by total passing by those

^c *Sen. Ben.* vii. 31. *Vincit malos pertinax bonitas.* Νίκα ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ τῷ κακῷ. *Rom. xii. 21.*

Irascitur aliquis? tu contra beneficiis provoca: cadit statim multis ab altera parte deserta; nisi par non pugnat: si utrinque certabitur, ille est melior, qui prior pedem retulit; victus est qui vicit. *Sen. de Ira,* ii. 34.

SERM. little causes of disgust the present contention is al-
XXIX. together avoided, or instantly appeased, our neigh-
 bor's passion suddenly evaporates and consumes
 itself; no remarkable footsteps of dissension remain;
 our neighbour, reflecting upon what is past, sees
 himself obliged by our discreet forbearance, however
 all possible means are used to prevent trouble and
 preserve peace. To this purpose, *The discretion*
^{Prov. xix.} _{11.} *of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory*
to pass over a transgression, saith Solomon: and,
^{Prov. xvii.9.} *He that covereth a transgression seeketh love,* saith
 the same wise prince. But further,

9. If we would live peaceably with all men, we
 must not over highly value ourselves, nor over-
 eagerly pursue our own things. We must not ad-
 mire our own endowments, nor insist upon our de-
 serts; for this will make us apt to depreciate others,
 and them to loathe us. We must not be over tender
 of our credit, and covetous of respect; for this will
 render us apt to take exceptions, and engage us in
 troublesome competitions for superiority of place, and
^{Prov. xxviii.} preeminence in the vain opinions of men. *He that*
^{25.} *is of a proud heart stirreth up strife:* and, *Only*
^{Prov. xiii.} _{10.} *(i. e. chiefly) from pride cometh contention,* saith
 Solomon. We must not be much addicted to our
 own interests, for this will dispose us to encroach
 upon the concerns of others, and them to resist
 our attempts, whence conflict and enmity will ne-
 cessarily arise. We must not prefer our own judg-
 ments, and imperiously obtrude them upon others;
 nor be pertinacious in persuading them to embrace
 our private opinions, nor violently urgent to a com-
 pliance with our humour. For these things are in-
 tolerably fastidious in conversation, and obnoxious

to be charged with usurpation and iniquity; all men SERM.
naturally challenging to themselves an equal, or at XXIX.
least a proportionable share of reason, together with
the free conduct of their lives uncontrollable by pri-
vate dictates. If therefore we desire to live quietly,
and not needlessly to disoblige or displease others,
we should be modest in esteeming our own abilities,
and moderate in pursuing our own advantages, and
in our converse not less complacent to others than
we desire they should be to us; and as liberal in
allowing leave to dissent from us, as we are bold in
taking freedom to abound in our own sense. And if
in debate a modest declaration of our opinion, and
the reasons inducing us thereto, will not prevail, it
behoves us to give over such a successless combat,
and to retire into the silent enjoyment of our own
thoughts. From not observing which rule, discourse
grows into contention, and contention improves into
feud and enmity.

10. If we would live peaceably, it concerns us to abstain from needless contests about matters of opinion, and questions either merely vain and frivolous, of little use or concernment; or over nice and subtle, and thence indeterminable by reason; or that are agitated with extraordinary eagerness and heat of passion; or such as are already defined by general consent; or such upon the decision of which the public peace and safety do depend. There are some controversies prickly, like brambles, and apt to scratch those that handle them, but yielding no savoury or wholesome fruit: such as concern the consequences of imaginary suppositions, the state and circumstances of beings to us unknown, the right application of artificial terms, and the like imperti-

SERM. nent matters ; which serve to no other purpose but
XXIX. the exercise of curious wits, and exciting emulation among them. Others there be concerning matters of more weighty moment, yet having the resolution depending upon secrets unsearchable, or the interpretation of ambiguous words and obscure phrases, or upon some other uncertain conjectures ; and are yet rendered more difficult by being entangled with inextricable folds of subtlety, nice distinctions, and crafty evasions, devised by the parties engaged in them for the maintenance of their causes respectively; whence it hath happened, though with immense care and diligence of both parts they have been long canvassed, that yet they do, and in all probability will for ever remain undecided. So that now to engage in contest about them, may be reasonably deemed nothing more than a wilful mispense of our time, labour, and good humour, by vainly reciprocating the saw of endless contention. Other questions there be in themselves of more easy resolution, and of considerable importance, which yet by extreme opposition of parties are so clouded and overgrown with insuperable prejudices, that the disputing them is seldom attended with other success, than an inflaming ourselves and others with passion. Others are by small and obscure parties managed against the common consent, and against the positive decrees of the most venerable authorities among men, by ventilating which, as truth is like to gain little, so peace is sure to suffer much. For as it is nowise a safe or advised course (except in case of necessary defence) to subject received opinions to the hazardous trial of a tumultuary conflict, their credit being better upheld by a stately reservedness, than by a

Non amplius inveniri licet quam quod a Deo discitur.

Tertull. de Anim. cap. 2.

popular forwardness of discourse ; as buildings stand SERM.
fastest that are never shaken, and those possessions XXIX.
remain most secure that are never called in question :
so, on the other hand, to countenance new and un-
couth paradoxes, as it argues too much arrogance
and presumption in confronting our single apprehen-
sions against the deliberate sense and suffrage of so
many men, yea so many ages of men ; and is likely
to prove a successless attempt, like swimming against
the current, accompanied with much toil and little
progress, so it serves no good end, but only foments
divisions, and disturbs both our private and the pub-
lic peace. But most of all we are to be cautious
of meddling with controversies of dangerous conse-
quence, wherein the public weal and quiet are con-
cerned, which bare the roots of sacred authority, and
prostitute the mysteries of government to vulgar in-
spection. Such points ought to be subjects of law,
not of syllogism, and the errors in them to be cor-
rected by punishment, rather than confuted by argu-
ment : neither can it be thought reasonable that the
interest of public peace should depend upon the event
of private disputation^d. It concerns us therefore, if
we would live peaceably in such disputable matters,
reserving all due reverence to the judgments of the
most, the best and wisest persons, to be content in a
modest privacy, to enjoy the results of a serious and
impartial disquisition, patiently enduring others to
dissent from us, and not attempting by needless,
fruitless, and endless contentions, to gain others to
our persuasions ; especially since the truth contended

^d Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀποροῦντες πότερον δεῖ τοὺς θεοὺς τιμῆν, καὶ τοὺς γονεῖς
ἀγαπᾶν, ἢ οὐ, κοιλάσεως δέονται· οἱ δὲ πότερον ἡ χιῶν λευκῆ, ἢ οὐ, αἰσθήσεως.
Arist. Top. i. 8.

SERM. for may not be worth the passion employed upon it,
XXIX. and the benefits of the victory not countervail the
 prejudices sustained in the combat. For goodness
 and virtue may often consist with ignorance and
 error, seldom with strife and discord. And this
 consideration I shall conclude with those exhortations
 of St. Paul, Tit. iii. 9. *But foolish questions, and
 genealogies, and contentions, and law-contests, de-
 cline; for they are unprofitable and vain.* And in
 2 Ep. to Tim. ii. 23—25. *But foolish and unlearned
 questions avoid, knowing that they gender strifes;
 and the servant of the Lord* (that is, a minister of
 religion) *must not strive, but be gentle to all men,
 apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those
 that are contrarily disposed.* And in the same
 chapter, ver. 14. *Of these things put them in re-
 membrance, charging them before the Lord, that
 they strive not about words to no profit, to the sub-
 verting of the hearers:* of so pernicious consequence
 did St. Paul esteem unnecessary wrangling and dis-
 putting to be. But further,

*Ταῦτα ἀνεπι-
 διεργάζομεν.*

11. If we desire to live peaceably, we must re-
 strain our pragmatical curiosity within the bounds of
 our proper business and concernment, not [being
curiosi in aliena republ.] invading other men's pro-
 vinces, and without leave or commission intermed-
 dling with their affairs^c; not rushing into their clo-
 sets, prying into their concealed designs, or dictating
 counsel to them without due invitation thereto; not
 controlling^c their actions, nor subjecting their pro-
 ceedings to our censure, without competent authority.

^c According to St. Paul's advice, 1 Thess. iv. 11. *Strive (or be
 ambitious) to be quiet, and to mind your own business.* (Φιλοτιμεῖ-
 οθαι ἡσυχάζειν, καὶ πράσσειν τὰ ὅδια.)

For these courses men usually look upon as rash intrusions, both injurious and reproachful to them, XXIX. usurping upon that freedom of choice, which all men passionately affect to preserve entire to themselves, and arguing them of weakness and incapacity to manage their own business: neither do men more naturally drive away flies that buzz about their ears, and molest them in their employments, than they with disdain repel such immodest and unseasonable meddlers in their affairs. Let no man suffer, saith St. Peter, *as a busybody in other men's matters:* ^{1 Pet. iv. 15.} intimating, that those who are impertinently inquisitive into other men's matters, make themselves liable to suffer (and that deservedly) for their fond curiosity and bold presumption. And, *He that prov. xxvi. passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not* ^{17.} *to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears,* saith Solomon; that is, he catcheth at that which he cannot hold, and vainly aims at that which he cannot effect, and rashly irritates those which will turn upon him and bite him. If therefore we would neither molest others, nor be disquieted ourselves, we must be like natural agents, never working aught beyond our proper sphere of activity. But especially, if we desire to live peaceably, we must beware of assuming to ourselves a liberty to censure the designs, decrees, or transactions of public authority, and of saying to our superiors, What doest thou? and much more by querulous murmurings, or clamorous declamations, of bringing envy and odium upon them. Few private men are capable of judging aright concerning those things, as being placed beneath in a valley, and wanting a due prospect upon the ground and causes of their proceedings, who by reason of

SERM. their eminent station can see more and further than
XXIX. they ; and therefore are incompetent judges, and unjustly presume to interpose their sentence in such cases. But suppose the actions of superiors notoriously blameable and scandalous, and that by infallible arguments we are persuaded thereof ; yet seeing neither the taxing of, nor complaint against them doth in anywise regularly belong to us, nor the discovery of our mind therein can probably be an efficacious means of procuring redress, and immediately tends to diminish the reputation and weaken the affection due to government, and consequently to impair the peaceable estate of things which by them is sustained, we are wholly to abstain from such unwarrantable, unprofitable, and turbulent practices ; and with a submiss and discreet silence, passing over the mis-carriages of our superiors, to wait patiently upon the providence, and implore the assistance of him, who is

Prov. xxi. 1. the only competent Judge of such, and sovereign Dis-
xxxiii. 15. poser of all things, who hath their hearts in his hands,
and fashioneth them as he thinks good. Further,

12. If we would live peaceably with all men, it behoves us not to engage ourselves so deeply in any singular friendship, or in devotion to any one party of men, as to be entirely partial to their interests, and prejudiced in their behalf, without distinct consideration of the truth and equity of their pretences in the particular matters of difference ; not to approve, favour, or applaud that which is bad in some ; to dislike, discountenance, or disparage that which is good in others : not, out of excessive kindness to some, to give just cause of distaste to others : not, for the sake of a fortuitous agreement in disposition, opinion, interest, or relation, to violate the duties of

justice or humanity. For he that upon such terms SERM. XXIX.
is a friend to any one man, or party of men, as to be resolved, with an implicit faith, or blind obedience, to maintain whatever he or they shall affirm to be true, and whatever they shall do to be good, doth in a manner undertake enmity against all men beside, and as it may happen, doth oblige himself to contradict plain truth, to deviate from the rules of virtue, and to offend Almighty God himself. This unlimited partiality we owe only to truth and goodness, and to God, (the fountain of them,) in no case to swerve from their dictates and prescriptions. He that followed Tiberius Gracchus in his seditious practices, Cic. in Lælio.
upon the bare account of friendship, and alleged in his excuse, that, if his friend had required it of him, he should as readily have put fire to the Capitol, was much more abominable for his disloyalty to his country, and horrible impiety against God, than commendable for his constant fidelity to his friend. And that soldier which is said to have told Cæsar, Luc. lib. i.
(in his first expedition against Rome,) that in obedience to his commands he would not refuse to sheathe his sword in the breast of his brother, or in the throat of his aged father, or in the bowels of his pregnant mother, was for his unnatural barbarity rather to be abhorred, than to be esteemed for his loyal affection to his general. And in like manner, he Prov. xxiv. 24. He that that, to please or gratify the humour of his friend, saith to the can be either injurious, or treacherous, or notably wicked, Thou art discourseous to any man else, is very blameable, and righteous; him shall renders himself deservedly odious to all others. the people curse, na- Lælius, who incomparably well both understood and tions shall practised the rules of friendship, is by Cicero reported Cic. in Lælio. to have made this the first and chief law thereof; Ut

SERM. *neque rogemus res turpes, nec faciamus rogati:*
XXIX. *That we neither require of our friends the performance of base and naughty things; nor, being requested of them, perform such ourselves.* And in the heraldry, or comparison of duties, as all others must give place to those of piety, verity, and virtue, so after them the duties of humanity justly challenge the next place of respect, even above those which belong to the highest degree of friendship, (due to our nearest relations, yea to our country itself,) precisely taken, abstracted and distinguished from those of humanity. For the world is in nature the first, the most comprehensive and dearest country of us all; and our general obligations to mankind are more ancient, more fundamental, and more indispensable, than those particular ones superadded to, or superstructed on them. The peace therefore of the world, and the general welfare of men its citizens, ought to be more dear to us, and the means conduced thereto more carefully regarded by us in our actions, than either the love, favour, or satisfaction of any particular persons is to be valued or pursued. And the not observing this rule may reasonably be esteemed to have a great influence upon the continuance of those implacable feuds and dissensions, wherewith the world is so miserably torn and shattered. Men's being peremptorily resolved to extol, countenance, or excuse promiscuously all the principles and proceedings of the party to which they have addicted themselves, and to see no error, fault, or abuse in them; but by all means to depress, vilify, and condemn (if not to reproach, calumniate, and persecute) the opinions and practices of others, and not to acknowledge in them any thing considerably good or com-

mendable; whence commonly all apprehend their SERM.
adversaries extremely unjust and disingenuous to- XXIX.
wards them, and are alienated from all thoughts (or
however discouraged from all hopes) of friendly ac-
commodation and reconciliation. But he, that would
live peaceably with all men, must be free in his
judgment, impartial in his dealing, and ingenuous in
his carriage toward all: not θαυμάζων πρόσωπα, admir- Jude 16.
ing or wondering at some men, (as if they were impec-
cable, or infallible,) nor having the truth in respect James ii. 1.
of persons, abetting in his friends only what is just
and true, and allowing the same in others, but in
neither by signal approbation countenancing any
thing false or evil; for so demeaning himself, he
giveth no man just occasion of displeasure or en-
mity against him.

13. If we would live peaceably ourselves, we
should endeavour to preserve peace, and prevent
differences, and reconcile dissensions among others,
by doing good offices, and making fair representa-
tions of intercurrent passages between them; by
concealing causes of future disgust, and removing
present misunderstandings, and excusing past mis-
takes; by allaying their passions, and rightly in-
forming their minds, by friendly intercessions, and
pacific advices. For the fire that devoureth our
neighbour's house threateneth and endangereth ours;
and it is hard to approach contention, without being
engaged therein. 'Tis not easy to keep ourselves in-
different or neutral; and doing so we shall in like-
lihood be maligned and persecuted by both the con-
tending parties. *Blessed are the peacemakers,* Matt. v. 9.
saith our Saviour, *for they shall be called the sons of
God;* that is, they shall be highly esteemed and re-

SERM. verenced for this divine quality, wherein they so
XXIX. nearly resemble the God of peace, and his blessed Son the great Mediator. But further, without respect to other recompense, and from the nature of their employment, such are immediately happy, and in this their virtuous practice rewards itself, that by appeasing others' quarrels, they save themselves from

To the counsellors of peace is joy. Prov. xii. 20.

trouble, and enjoy themselves that tranquillity which they procure to others. But those informing sycophants, those internuncios of pestilent tales, and incendiaries of discord, that (from bad nature, or upon base design) by the still breath of clandestine whispers, or by the more violent blasts of impudent calumnies, kindle the flames of dissension, or foment them among others; that, by disseminating infamous rumours, and by malicious suggestions, instil jealousies into, and nourish malevolent surmises in the minds of

Prov. xvi. 28. men, *separating*, as it is in the Proverbs, *between chief friends*, and widening the distance between others: these, I say, from the seeds of variance they scatter among others, reap in the end mischief and disturbance to themselves; nor can expect to enjoy the benefit of that quiet, which they labour to de-

Prov. xvii. 14. prive others of. *The beginning of strife*, saith Solomon, *is as when one letteth out water*; and he that, to the intent his neighbour's lands should be overflowed with a torrent of dissension, doth unloose the dams, and cut the banks of former friendship, may

Prov. xxv. 8. (if he be wise) expect the merciless flood should at length reach himself, and that his own habitation

Vid. Prov. xi. 27. He that diligently seeketh good pro- should be at last surrounded therewith. For when men at length begin to be weary, and to repent of their needless quarrels, and the mischievous consequences attending them, and to be inquisi-

tive into the causes and instruments of their vex- SERM.
ation, they will certainly find out, detest, and in- XXIX.
vert the edge of their displeasure upon these cureth fa-
wretched makebates; and so the poison they mingled he that
for others they themselves drink up; the cata- seeketh
strophe of the tragedy (begun by them) is acted mischief, it
upon themselves; they sink down into the pit they shall come
made for others, and in the net which they hid is
their own foot taken: *Et delator habet quod dedit*
exitium.

Lastly, If we would effectually observe this precept, we must readily comply with the innocent customs, and obey the established laws of the places where we live. I say first comply with the customs; which also are in effect inferior laws enacted by the tacit agreement of the generality of men; the non-observation of which is upon many accounts very prejudicial to peaceable life. For to those concerned in it, it will always seem to intimate a squeamish niceness, a foward perverseness, an arrogant self-conceitedness, a manifest despising other men's judgments, and a virtual condemning their practices of fault or folly, and consequently a monopolizing all goodness, and appropriating all wisdom to himself; qualities intolerably odious to men, and productive of enmity. It incenses the people (hugely susceptive of provocation) with a sense of notable injury done, and contempt cast upon it. For the only authority, which the commonalty can lay claim to, consists in prescribing rules of decency in language, habit, gesture, ceremony, and other circumstances of action, declared and ratified by ordinary practice; nonconformity to which is by them adjudged a marvellous irregularity, contumacy, and rebellion against the

SERM. majesty of the people, and is infallibly revenged and
XXIX. punished by them.

Epist. ad
Att. lib. ii.
Ep. i.

¹ Cor. ix.
20, 21, 22.
x. 33.

There is no preserving peace, nor preventing broils and stirs, but by punctually observing that ordinary rule of equity, that in cases of doubtful debate, and points of controverted practice, the fewest should yield to the most, the weakest bend to the strongest, and that to the greatest number should be allowed at least the greatest appearance of reason. To which purpose we may observe, that the best and wisest men (not to displease those with whom they conversed, as far as their duty to God, and their conscience would permit) have commonly in their manners of life followed not what in their retired judgment they most approved, but what suited to the customs of their times and places, avoiding a morose singularity, as offensive to others, and productive of disquiet to themselves^f. You know how Cicero censured Cato for endeavouring, against the grain and predominant genius of those times, to reduce things to a strict agreement with his private notions : *Ille optimo animo utens, et summa fide, nocet interdum reipublicæ. Dicit enim tanquam in Platonis τολυτείᾳ, non tanquam in Romuli fæce sententiam.* But a more clear and pertinent instance we have in St. Paul, who thus represents his own practice : *I have made myself a servant to all: Unto the Jews I became as a Jew; to them that are without law, as without law: To the weak became I as weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all*

^f *Id agamus, ut meliorem vitam sequamur quam vulgus, non ut contrariam; alioqui quos emendari volumus fugamus et a nobis avertimus.*

Temperetur vita inter bonos mores et publicos, &c. Sen. Ep. 5.

means save some. St. Paul wisely knew, that, by a SERM. prudent compliance with men's customs, and con-

^{Vid. Acts}
^{xxi.}descension to their capacities, he engaged to him, or at least did not alienate from him, their affections; and thereby became more capable of infusing good doctrine into their minds, and promoting their spiritual good. And the same course was generally taken by the primitive Christians, who in all things (not inconsistent with the rules and principles of their religion) did industriously conform their conversation to the usual practices of men; thereby shunning those scandalous imputations of pride and perverseness, which then rendered the Jews so odious to the world, as appears by divers passages in the ancient apologists for Christian religion: particularly Justin Martyr (in his Epistle to Diognetus) hath these words: Χριστιανοὶ γὰρ οὐτε γῆ, οὐτε φωνὴ, οὐτε ἔθεσι διακεκριμένοι τῶν λοιπῶν εἰσὶν ἀνθράτων οὐτε γὰρ που πόλεις Ἰδίας κατοικοῦσιν, οὐτε διαλέκτῳ τινὶ παρηλλαγμένῃ χρῶνται, οὐτε βίον παράσημον ἀσκοῦσιν—κατοικοῦντες δὲ πόλεις Ἑλληνικάς τε καὶ Βαρβάρους, ὡς ἕκαστος ἐκληρώθη, ἐν τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις ἔθεσιν ἀκολουθοῦντες, &c. *The Christians neither in dwelling, language, or customs differ from the rest of men; they neither inhabit towns proper to themselves, nor use any peculiar dialect, nor exercise an uncouth manner of living; but, as by chance it is allotted to them, inhabiting cities belonging both to Greeks and Barbarians, comply with the customs of the country.* And much more hath he there; and much Tertullian likewise in his Apologetic, to the same purpose. Neither do we find in the life of our Saviour, that exact pattern of wisdom and goodness, that in any thing he did affect to differ from the received customs of his time and country, except such as were

SERM. grounded upon vain conceits, extremely prejudicial
XXIX. to piety, or directly repugnant thereto.

And I cannot except from this rule the compliance with religious customs used in the worship and service of God : since a wilful discrepancy from them doth much more destroy peace, and kindle the flame of contention, inasmuch as men are apt to apprehend themselves much more slighted and more condemned by a disagreement in those, than in matters of lesser concernment. And it cannot reasonably be imagined, that the God of love and peace, who questionless delights to see men converse in peace and amity, and who therefore in general terms enjoins us to pursue the things that make for peace, (whereof certainly in reason and to experience, following indifferent and harmless customs, not expressly repugnant to his law, nor to the dictates of natural reason, is one thing, and not the least,) in our addresses to himself (partly designed and mainly serving more strictly to unite, not to dissociate men in affection) should dislike or disapprove the use of this course so expedient and conducible to peace : especially since he infinitely more regards the substance of the duty, and the devotion of the heart therein, than the manner, or any circumstantial appendages thereof : it is certain however, that St. Paul intimates a wilful departure from ordinary practice in such cases, to proceed from a contentious disposition : *But if any man, saith he, have a mind to be contentious, (so δοκεῖ φιλόνεικος εἶναι imports,) we have no such custom, nor the churches of God.*

¹ Cor. xi.
^{16.}

But yet much more is peaceable conversation impeached by disobedience to established laws, those great bulwarks of society, fences of order, and sup-

ports of peace : which he that refuses to obey, is so far from living peaceably with all men, that he may reasonably be presumed unwilling to have peace with any man ; since in a manner he defies all mankind, vilifies its most solemn judgments, endeavours to dissolve those sacred bands by which its union is contained, and to subvert the only foundations of public tranquillity. He declares himself either to affect an universal tyranny over, or an abhorrency from society with, other men, to be unwilling to live with them upon equal terms, or to submit to any fair arbitration, to desire that strifes should be endless, and controversies never decided, who declines the verdict of law, the most solemn issue of deliberate advice, proceeding from the most honourable, most wise, most worthy and select persons, and involving in it the consent of the whole commonwealth. St. Paul, directing that prayers should be made for princes and those in authority, assigns the reason, *that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty* : and certainly if we are to pray for, we are also obliged to obey them in order to the same end, which to do is absolutely in our power, and more immediately requisite to that purpose. For as no peace can be preserved without the influence of authority ; so no authority can subsist without obedience to its sanctions. He that is desirous to enjoy the privileges of this happy estate of peace, must in reason be content to perform the duties enjoined, and bear the common burdens imposed by those who are the protectors of it.

Thus, as plainly as I could, have I described what it is to live peaceably, and what the means are that principally conduce thereto : I should now proceed

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SERM. to consider the object of the duty, and the reasons
XXIX. why it respects all men ; as also whence it comes,
that sometimes we may fail in our endeavour of at-
taining this desirable condition : and lastly, to pro-
ound some inducements persuasive of its practice.
But I must not further encroach on your patience,
and shall therefore reserve these things to the next
opportunity.

*Now the peace of God, which passeth all under-
standing, keep your hearts and minds in the know-
ledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ
our Lord ; and the blessing of God Almighty, the
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be among you, and
remain with you always. Amen.*

S E R M O N XXX.

OF A PEACEABLE TEMPER AND CARRIAGE.

Rom. xii. 18.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

I HAVE very lately considered what it is to *live* SERM. *peaceably*, and what are the duties included therein ; XXX. and what means conduce thereto.

II. I proceed now to consider the object thereof, and why the duty of living peaceably extends to *all men*, that is, why we are bound to bear good-will, and do good offices, and shew civil respects to all men ; and to endeavour that all men reciprocally be well-affected toward us. For it might with some colour of reason be objected, and said, Why should I be obliged heartily to love those, that desperately hate me ; to treat them kindly, that use me despitefully ; to help them, that would hinder me ; to relieve them, that would plunge me into utter distress ; to comfort them, that delight in my affliction ; to be respective to, and tender of, their reputation, who despise, defame, and reproach me ; to be indulgent and favourable to them, who are harsh and rigorous in their dealings with me ; to spare and pardon them, who with implacable malice persecute me ? Why should I seek their friendship, who disdainfully reject

SERM. mine? why prize their favour, who scorn mine? why
XXX. strive to please them, who purposely offend me? Or
why should I have any regard to men, void of all
faith, goodness, or desert? And most of all, why
should I be bound to maintain amicable correspon-
dence with those, who are professed enemies to piety
and virtue, who oppugn truth, and disturb peace,
and countenance vice, error, and faction? How can
any love, consent of mind, or communion of good
offices, intercede between persons so contrarily dis-
posed? I answer, they may, and ought, and that
because the obligation to these ordinary perform-
ances is not grounded upon any peculiar respects,
special qualifications, or singular actions of men,
(which are contingent and variable,) but upon the
indefectible score of common humanity. We owe
them (as the philosopher alleged, when he dispensed
his alms to an unworthy person) οὐ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, ἀλλὰ
τῷ ἀνθρώπινῳ not to the men, but to human nature
resident in them. There be indeed divers other
sorts of love, in nature and object more restrained,
built upon narrower foundations, and requiring more
extraordinary acts of duty and respect, not com-
petent to all men; as a love of friendship, founded
upon long acquaintance, suitableness of disposition,
and frequent exchanges of mutual kindness; a love
of gratitude, due to the reception of valuable bene-
fits; a love of esteem, belonging to persons endued
with worth and virtue; a love of relation, resulting
from kindred, affinity, neighbourhood, and other
common engagements. But the love of benevolence,
(which is precedent to these, and more deeply rooted
in nature, more ancient, more unconfined, and more
immutable,) and the duties mentioned consequent on

it, are grounded upon the natural constitution, necessary properties, and unalterable condition of humanity, and are upon several accounts due thereto.

1. Upon account of universal cognation, agreement, and similitude of nature. For *οἰκεῖος ἄτας ἀνθρώποις καὶ φίλοις* *All men naturally are of kin and friends to each other*, saith Aristotle. *Et* ^{8.} *Eth. cap.* ^{1.} *fratres etiam vestri sumus jure naturæ matris unius; We are also your brethren in the right of nature, our common mother*, saith Tertullian of old, *In Apolog.* in the name of the Christians to the heathens. We are but several streams issuing from one primitive source; several branches sprouting from the same stock; several stones hewed out of the same quarry: one substance, by miraculous efficacy of the divine benediction diffused and multiplied. One element affords us matter, and one fire actuates it, kindled at first by the breath of God. One blood flows in all ^{Acts xvii.} ^{26.} our veins; one nourishment repairs our decayed bodies, and one common air refreshes our languishing spirits^a. We are cohabitants of the same earth, and fellow-citizens of the same great commonwealth; *Unam remp. omnium agnoscimus mundum*, said the fore-mentioned apologist for Christianity. We were all fashioned according to the same original idea, (resembling God our common Father,) all endowed with the same faculties, inclinations, and affections; all conspire in the essential and more

^a Αὐτράνδων εἰκὸν ἀνέγει τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τῷ συντοῦ δὲ ἔχει τὸν Δία πρόγονον δοπερ υἱός ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν σπερμάτων γέγονε, καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀνοθεσ καταβολῆς, &c. Epict. i. 13.

Nemo est in genere humano, cui non dilectio, et si non promutua charitate, pro ipsa tamen communis naturæ societate debeatur. Aug. Ep. 121. ad Probam.

SERM. notable ingredients of our constitution ; and are only
XXX. distinguished by some accidental, inconsiderable cir-
circumstances of age, place, colour, stature, fortune, and
the like ; in which we differ as much from ourselves
in successions of time. So that what Aristotle said
of a friend is applicable to every man ; every man is
ἄλλος αὐτὸς, *another self*^b : and he that hates an-
other, detests his own most lively picture ; he that
harms another, injures his own nature ; he that denies
relief to another, starves a member of his own body,
Prov. xi. 17. and withers a branch of his own tree. *The merci-*
ful man doeth good to his own soul ; but he that is
cruel troubleth his own flesh. Neither can any per-
sonal demerit of vicious habit, erroneous opinion,
enormous practice, or signal courtesy towards us,
dissolve these bands : for as no unkindness of a
brother can wholly rescind that relation, or disoblige
us from the duties annexed thereto ; so neither upon
the faults or injuries of any man can we ground a
total dispensation from the offices of humanity,
especially if the injuries be not irreparable, nor the
faults incurable.

See Deut.
xxv. 3.—
Lest thy
brother
seem vile
unto thee.

2. We are indispensably obliged to these duties,
because the best of our natural inclinations prompt
us to the performance of them ; especially those of
pity and benignity, which are manifestly discernible
in all, but most powerful and vigorous in the best
natures ; and which, questionless, by the most wise
and good Author of our beings were implanted therein
both as monitors to direct, and as spurs to incite us
to the performance of our duty. For the same

^b Nihil est enim unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes
inter nosmetipsos sumus, &c. Cic. de Legib. i. p. 161.

bowels, that, in our want of necessary sustenance, SERM. do by a lively sense of pain inform us thereof, and XXX. instigate us to provide against it, do in like manner grievously resent the distresses of another, and thereby admonish us of our duty, and provoke us to relieve them. Even the stories of calamities, that in ages long since past have happened to persons nowise related to us, yea, the fabulous reports of tragical events, do (even against the bent of our wills, and all resistance of reason) melt our hearts with compassion, and draw tears from our eyes; and thereby evidently signify that general sympathy which naturally intercedes between all men, since we can —*hæc no-*
—*stri pars op-*
neither see, nor hear of, nor imagine another's grief, *timasensus,*
without being afflicted ourselves. Antipathies may —*mutuus*
be natural to wild beasts; but to rational creatures *ut nos af-*
they are wholly unnatural. And on the other side, *factus pe-*
as nature to eating and drinking, and such acts *tere auxili-*
requisite to the preservation of our life, hath ad-
um, et præ-
joined a sensible pleasure and satisfaction, enticing *stare jube-*
us to, and encouraging us in the performance of *ret. Juven.*
them; so, and doubtless to the same end, hath she
made relieving the necessities of others, and doing
good offices to them, to be accompanied with a very
contentful and delicious relish to the mind of the
doer. Epicurus, that great master of pleasure, did
himself confess, that to bestow benefits was not only
more brave, but more pleasant, than to receive them;
(Ἐπίκουρος, saith ^c Plutarch, τοῦ εὖ πάσχειν, τὸ εὖ ποιεῖν, οὐ
μόνον κάλλιστ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡδιον εἶναι φησί.) And, certainly,
no kind of actions a man can perform are attended
with a more pure, more perfect, more savoury de-

^c De Philos. convictu cum Princip. Εὐφράνου τὸ εὑρυτεῖν. M.
Ant.

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SERM. light, than those of beneficence are. Since nature
XXX. therefore hath made our neighbour's misery our
pain, and his content our pleasure; since with in-
dissoluble bands of mutual sympathy she hath con-
catenated our fortunes and affections together; since
by the discipline of our sense she instructs us, and
by the importunity thereof solicits us to the ob-
servance of our duty, let us follow her wise direc-
tions, and conspire with her kindly motions; let us
not stifle or weaken by disuse, or contrary practice,
but by conformable action cherish and confirm the
good inclinations of nature.

3. We are obliged to these duties upon account of common equity. We have all (the most sour and stoical of us all) implanted in us a natural ambition, and a desire (which we can by no means eradicate) of being beloved and respected by all; and are disposed in our need to demand assistance, commisera-
tion of our misfortunes, and relief in our distress of all that are in capacity to afford them; and are apt to be vehemently displeased, to think ourselves hardly dealt with, and to complain of cruelty and inhumanity in those that refuse them to us: and therefore in all reason and equity we should readily pay the same love, respect, aid, and comfort to others, which we expect from others; for, *Beneficium qui dare nescit, injuste petit*; nothing is more unreasonable, or unequal, than to require from others those good turns, which upon like occasion we are unwilling to render to others.

4. We are obliged to these duties of humanity, upon account of common interest, benefit, and ad-
vantage. The welfare and safety, the honour and reputation, the pleasure and quiet of our lives are

concerned in our maintaining a loving correspondence with all men. For so uncertain is our condition, so obnoxious are we to manifold necessities, that there is no man whose good-will we may not need, whose good word may not stand us in stead, whose helpful endeavour may not sometime oblige us. The great Pompey, the glorious triumpher over nations, and admired darling of fortune, was beholden at last to a slave for the composing his ashes, and celebrating his funeral obsequies. The honour of the greatest men depends on the estimation of the least; and the good-will of the meanest peasant is a brighter ornament to the fortune, a greater accession to the grandeur of a prince, than the most radiant gem in his royal diadem. However the spite and enmity of one (and him the most weak otherwise and contemptible) person may happen to spoil the content of our whole life, and deprive us of the most comfortable enjoyments thereof; may divert our thoughts from our delightful employments to a solicitous care of self-preservation and defence; may discompose our minds with vexatious passions; may by false reports, odious suggestions, and slanderous defamations blast our credit, raise a storm of general hatred, and conjure up thousands of enemies against us; may by insidious practices supplant and undermine us, prejudice our welfare, endanger our estate, and involve us in a bottomless gulph of trouble: it is but reasonable therefore, if we desire to live securely, comfortably, and quietly, that by all honest means we should endeavour to purchase the good-will of all men, and provoke no man's enmity needlessly; since any man's love may be useful, and every man's hatred is dangerous.

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SERM. 5. We are obliged to these duties by a tacit compact and fundamental constitution of mankind, in pursuance of those principal designs, for which men were incorporated, and are still contained in civil society. For to this purpose do men congregate, cohabit, and combine themselves in sociable communion, that thereby they may enjoy a delightful conversation, void of fear, free from suspicion, and free from danger; promote mutual advantage and satisfaction; be helpful and beneficial each to other: abstracting from which commodities, the retirements of a cloister, or the solitudes of a desert, the life of a recluse, or of a wild beast, would perhaps be more desirable than these of gregarious converse: for as men, being pleased and well-affected to each other, are the most obliging friends, and pleasant companions; so being enraged, they are the most mischievous and dangerous neighbours, the most fierce and savage enemies. By neglecting, therefore, or contravening these duties of humanity, we frustrate the main ends of society, disappoint the expectations of each other, subvert the grounds of ordinary civility, and in the commonwealth deal as unpolitely, as the members in the body should act unnaturally, in subtracting mutual assistance, or harming each other; as if the eye should deny to the hands the direction of sight, and the hands in revenge should pluck out the eyes.

6. We are by observing these rules to oblige and render men well-affected to us, because being upon such terms with men conduceth to our living (not only delightfully and quietly, but) honestly and religiously in this world. How peace and edification,

spiritual comfort and temporal quiet do concur and SERM. cooperate, we see intimated Acts ix. 31. *Then had* XXX. *the churches peace throughout all Judæa, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified: and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.* St. Paul advised the Christians of his time, liable to persecution, *to make* ^{1 Tim. ii.} *prayers for all men,* (and especially for those in ^{1, 2.} eminent power,) *that they might lead* ^d *a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty;* to pray for them, that is, to pray that they might be so disposed, as not to molest, interrupt, or discourage them in the exercise of virtue, and practice of piety. For these by a tranquillity of mind, a sedateness of affections, a competency of rest, and leisure, and retirement, a freedom from amazing fear, distracting care, and painful sense, are greatly advanced; of which advantages by contentious broils and enmities we are deprived, and encumbered with the contrary impediments. They breed thorny anxieties, and by them choke the seeds of good intention: they raise dusky fumes of melancholy, by them intercepting the beams of spiritual light, and stifling the flames of devout affection. By them our thoughts are affixed upon the basest, and taken off from the most excellent objects; our fancies are disordered by turbulent animosities; our time is spent, and our endeavour taken up in the most ungrateful and unprofitable employments, of defeating the attempts, resisting the assaults, disproving the calumnies, countermiming the plots of adversaries; they bring us upon the stage against our will, and make us act parts in tragedies, neither becoming,

^d Ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον, a retired and quiet life.

SERM. nor delighting us. They disturb often our natural rest, and hinder us in the despatch of our ordinary business; and much more impeach the steadiness of our devotion, and obstruct the course of religious practice. They tempt us also to omissions of our duty, to unseemly behaviour, and to the commissions of grievous sin; to harsh censure, envious detraction, unwarrantable revenge, repining at the good successes, and delighting in the misfortunes of others. Many examples occur in history, like those of Hanno the Carthaginian, and Quint. Metellus, (Pompey's antagonist,) who, in pursuance of some private grudges, have not only betrayed their own interests, and sullied their own reputations; but notably disserved and damnified the public weal of their country: and so will our being engaged in enmity with men cause us to neglect, if not to contradict, our dearest concernments; whence we should carefully avoid the occasions thereof, and by an innocent and beneficent conversation oblige men to a friendly correspondence with us.

7. We are obliged to perform these duties of humanity, because by so doing we become more capable of promoting goodness in others, and so of fulfilling the highest duties of Christian charity; of successfully advising and admonishing others; of instructing their ignorance, and convincing their mistakes; of removing their prejudices, and satisfying their scruples; of reclaiming them from vice, error, faction; and reconciling them to virtue, truth, and peace. For by no force of reason, or stratagem of wit, are men so easily subdued, by no bait so throughly allured and caught, as by real courtesy, gentleness, and affability; as on the other side, by a sour and

peevish humour, supercilious looks, bitter language, SERM. and harsh dealing; men are rendered indocile and XXX. intractable, averse from better instruction, obstinate in their ways, and pertinacious in their conceits. Easily do men swallow the pill gilded with fair carriage, and sweetened by kind speech; readily do they afford a favourable ear to the advice seeming to proceed from good-will, and a tender care of their good: but the physic of wholesome admonition being steeped in the vinegar of reproach, and tempered with the gall of passion, becomes distasteful and loathsome to the patient: neither will men willingly listen to the reasonings of those, whom they apprehend disaffected to their persons, and more desirous to wound their reputations, than to cure their distempers. The slightest argument, the most simple and unpolished oration, issuing from the mouth of a friend, is wonderfully more prevalent, than the strongest demonstration, than the most powerful eloquence of an enemy. For obliging usage and courteous speech unlock the affections, and by them insinuate into the reason of men: but surly deportment and forward expressions dam up the attention with prejudice, and interclude all avenues to the understanding. An illustration of which discourse we have from comparing the different practice of the Jews, and the ancient Christians, with the contrary successes thereof. The Jews, by their seditious and turbulent practices, by their insolent contempt, and implacable hatred of others; (for you know what Tacitus saith of them: *Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium;*) by their perverse and unsociable humours, declining all intercourse, and refusing ordi-

Hist. lib. v.

SERM. nary offices of humanity (so much as to shew the
XXX. way, or to direct the thirsty traveller to the fountain) to any not of their own sect, did procure an odium, scorn, and infamy upon their religion, rendered all men averse from inquiring into, or entertaining any good opinion thereof, and so very little enlarged its bounds, and gained few proselytes thereto. But the Christians, by a mild, patient, and peaceable behaviour; by obedience to laws, and compliance with harmless customs; by perfect innocence, and abstinence from doing injury; by paying due respects, and performing civil offices and demonstrations of benevolence; by loving conversation, and friendly commerce with all, commended their doctrine to the regard of men^c: and by this only piece of rhetoric (without terror of arms, or countenance of power, or plausibility of discourse, or promise of temporal reward) subdued the faith of men, and persuaded a great part of the world to embrace their excellent profession.

Tertull.
Apol.

“ We converse with you like men, we use the same diet, habit, and necessary furniture: we have recourse to your tribunals; we frequent your markets, your fairs, your shops, your stalls, your sham-bles, your baths: we cohabit, we sail, we war, we till, we trade, we maintain all manner of commerce with you;” saith the Christian apologist to the pagans, in behalf of the ancient Christians. Which kind of practice they derived not only from the sweet temper and noble genius of their religion, but from the express institution of the first teachers

^c Thus the ancient Christians: but when religion declined, dissension and ill-will did grow; so that the heathen historian (*Am. Mar. lib. xxii.*) could say of Julian: *Nullas infestas hominibus bestias, ut sunt sibi ferales plerique Christianorum, expertus.*

thereof, and from their exemplary practice therein. SERM. For both by doctrine did the apostles exhort, and by XXX. their example incite them to adorn the gospel, and render the discipline of Christ amiable by their meek, gentle, compliant, and inoffensive conversation ; and thereby to allure others to a willing entertainment thereof. To this purpose are those exhortations, Phil. iv. 5. *Let your moderation* ($\tauὸ\; \epsilon̄πιεικὲς\; ιμῶν$, *your equity, or gentleness*) *be known to all men* : and, 1 Thess. v. 14.—*Comfort the afflicted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all. Be ye all careful not to render evil for evil, but always pursue goodness toward each other, and toward all* : and, Gal. vi. 10. *As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men* : and, Tit. iii. 1, 2. *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to be ready to every good work, to reproach no man, not to be contentious, but gentle, shewing all meekness to all men* : and, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. *The minister of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; (or those that are otherwise disposed, τοὺς ἀντιδιατίθεμένους;) if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth* : where gentleness toward all, and meekness toward adversaries, are oppositely conjoined, with aptness to teach and instruct; the one qualification so effectually predisposing to the other: and it is beside intimated, that gentle and meek treatment are suitable instruments ordinarily employed by God to convert men from error to truth.

8. We are bound hereto in compliance and conformity to the best patterns; God, Christ, the apo-

SERM. stles, the primitive saints. This illustrious doctor
XXX. of Christian religion, St. Paul, did not fail to second
1 Cor. x.
32, 33. this his doctrine with his own example: for, *Give*
none offence, saith he, *neither to the Jews, nor to*
the Gentiles, nor to the church of God; even as I
please all men in all things, not seeking mine own
profit, but the profit of many, that they may be
saved. Please all men in all things: what could St.
1 Cor. ix.
12, &c. Paul say, or what do more? And again, *For though,*
I be free from all men, yet have I made
myself a servant unto all, that I might gain the
more. To the weak became I as weak, that I
might gain the weak: I am made all things to all
men, that by all means I might save some. See
how far this charitable design of doing good to
others transported him: he parted with his own
freedom, that he might redeem them from the sla-
very of a wicked life; he denied his own present
satisfaction, that he might procure them a lasting
content; he despised his own profit, that he might
promote their spiritual advantage; he prostituted
his own reputation, that he might advance them to
a condition of true glory. He underwent grievous
afflictions for their comfort, sustained restless pains
for their ease, and hazarded his own safety for their
salvation. He condescended to their infirmities,
suited his demeanour to their tempers, complied with
their various humours, and contrary customs: he
differed from himself, that he might agree with
them, and transformed himself into all shapes, that
he might convert them into what they should be,
reform their manners, and translate them into a
happy estate. But above all is the practice of our
Lord himself most remarkable to this purpose; and

discovers plainly to him that observes an univer-
sally large and unrestrained philanthropy. For hav- SERM.
XXX.
ing from a wonderful conspiracy of kindness and
good-will (between him and his eternal Father) to-
ward the world of men, descended willingly from
the throne of his celestial majesty, and enveloped his
divine glory in a cloud of mortal frailty, and *that*,
as the apostle saith, he might reconcile all things Coloss.i.20.
in heaven and earth, conjoin God and man by a
nearer alliance, and unite men together by the more
sacred bands of common relation to himself: having
assumed not only the outward shape and corporeal
resemblance of man, but the inward frame, and real
passions of human souls; he disdained not accordingly
to obey the laws, to follow the inclinations, to ob-
serve the duties of the best and most perfect hu-
manity; with an equal and impartial bounty im-
parting free admittance, familiar converse, friendly
aid and succour unto all, even the worst of men in
all appearance, (and that so far, that some rigorous
censurers thence presumed to tax him as *a glutton*, Matt. xi.
19.
and a good-fellow, a friend to publicans and sin-
ners,) distributing liberally to all the incomparable
benefits of his heavenly doctrine, of his holy exam-
ple, of his miraculous power; instructing the igno-
rances, detecting the errors, dispossessing the devils;
sustaining the weaknesses, overlooking the injuries,
comforting the afflictions, supplying the necessities,
healing the diseases, and remedying all the miseries
of all, that did not wilfully reject their own welfare:
He went about, saith St. Peter in the Acts, *doing* Acts x. 38.
good, and healing all that were oppressed of the
devil: and, *He went about all the cities and vil-* Matt. ix.
35.
lages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching

SERM. *the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people*, saith St.

XXX. Matthew's Gospel. He despised not the meanest, either in outward estate, or spiritual improvement. He invited all unto him, repelled or discouraged none; nor refused to any that came unto him his counsel or his help. He was averse from no man's

Luke xviii. society, (and if in any degree from any, chiefly from 9.

those, who confidently pretended to extraordinary sanctity, and proudly contemned others.) Meek and gentle he was, mild and patient; courteous and benign; lowly and condescensive; tender and compassionate in his conversation unto all. And for a complement of his transcendent charity, and for an

Rom. viii. enforcement unto ours, he laid down his life for us 32.

all, as a common price to purchase remission of sins; a general ransom to redeem the human creation from the captivity of hell and slavery of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; demolishing by his pacific death all partition-walls, and laying open all enclosures of the divine favour; reconciling God to man, and combining man to himself by the fresh cement of his precious blood: so that now not only as fellow creatures, but (which is exceedingly more) as partakers of the same common redemption, as objects of the same mercy, as obliged in the same common debt, and as capable of the same eternal happiness, by new and firmer engagements we are bound to all mutual kindness and

Rom. xiv. benevolence toward all. For, *Destroy not*, saith St. 15. Paul, (and by like reason I may say, harm not, vex not, be not unkind to) *him, for whom Christ died.*

Nay, further, we have the example of Almighty God himself directing, and by our Saviour's express

admonition obliging us to this universal beneficence, SERM. compassion, and patience towards all: who by express testimony of sacred writ, and by palpable signs of continual experience, declareth himself to be a lover of mankind; to be good to all, and tenderly merciful over all his works; not to afflict willingly,<sup>Tit. iii. 4.
Psal. cxlv. 9.</sup> nor grieve the children of men; to compassionate the miseries, and supply the needs, and relieve the distresses, to desire the salvation, and to delight in the happiness of men: who with an indifferent, unlimited munificence dispenses his blessings, extends his watchful providence, and imparts his loving care unto all; causing his sun with comfortable beams to shine, and the refreshing showers to descend, the earth to yield her pleasant fruits, the temperate seasons to recur, and all the elements to minister succour, joy, and satisfaction even to the most impious and ungrateful toward him: who with immense clemency and long-sufferance overlooks the <sup>Vid. Cle-
ment. Epist.
ad Cor. pag.
27.</sup> sacrilegious affronts offered daily to his majesty, the outrageous violations of his laws, and the contumacious neglects of his unexpressible goodness: who patiently waits for the repentance, and incessantly solicits the reconciliation, courts the amity, and in a manner begs the good-will of his most deadly enemies; whom he hath always in his hand, and can crush to nothing at his pleasure. For, *We are ambassadors for Christ, as if God by us did entreat you: we beseech you in Christ's behalf; be reconciled to God,* saith St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 20.

Since therefore upon account of natural consanguinity, of our best inclinations, of common equity, and general advantage, and an implicit compact between men; of securing our, and promoting others'

SERM. virtue and piety ; from the exhortations of scripture mentioned, and many more tending to the same purpose ; from the example of the ancient Christians, the leaders and champions of our religion, of the apostles, the masters and patriarchs thereof, of our blessed Redeemer, and of Almighty God himself, we are obliged to this universal benevolence and beneficence toward all ; no misapprehensions of judgment, no miscarriages in practice, no ill dispositions of soul, no demerits in himself, no discourtesies toward us, ought wholly to alienate our affections from, or to avert us from doing good, or to incline us to render evil for evil unto any person : especially considering, that the omissions of others cannot excuse us from the performance of our duty ; that no man is to be presumed incorrigible, nor (like the lapsed angels) concluded in desperate impenitence ; and that our loving and gentle demeanour toward them may be instrumental to their amendment, and the contrary may contribute to their progress and continuance in offences ; that God hath promised to us a reward of our patience, and hath reserved to them a season of judgment and punishment, if they persist obstinate in their disorderly courses ; that to avenge their trespasses belongs not to us, but to Almighty God, who is more nearly concerned in, and more injured by them, and is yet content to endure them, to prolong their lives, to continue his benefits to them, and to expect their conversion : that our differing from them is not to be attributed to ourselves, but wholly, or chiefly, to the goodness of God ; that we always were, are, and shall be liable to the same errors, vices, and misdemeanours : that, lastly, the faults and follies of others, like the maims

of body, distempers of soul, or crosses of fortune, SERM.
(being their own greatest unhappinesses,) require XXX.
rather our pity than our hatred, to be eased by our
help than aggravated by our unkindness. 'Tis too
scant therefore and narrow a charity that is limited
by correspondence of courtesy, or by the personal
merits of others. We are bound to live peaceably with,
that is, to be innocent, beneficial, respective to all, and
to seek the reciprocal good-will, love, and amity of all.
But I have insisted too long upon this particular,
concerning the object of this duty, and its extension.

III. I proceed briefly to consider whence it comes,
that, (as I before observed was intimated in these
words, *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you,*)
though we do our parts, and perform carefully the
duties incumbent on us, though we bear good-will,
and do good offices, and yield due respects, and ab-
stain from all not only injurious, but rigorous deal-
ings toward all; though we revile none, nor cen-
sure harshly, nor presumptuously intermeddle with
others' affairs; though we obey laws, and comply
with received customs, and avoid all occasions of
contention; though our tempers be meek, our prin-
ciples peaceable, and our conversations inoffensive,
we may yet prove successless in our endeavours to
live peaceably, and may be hated, harmed, and dis-
quieted in our course of life. That it so happens,
we find by plain experience, and manifold example.
For *Moses, the meekest man upon earth,* and com-
mended beside by all circumstances of divine favour,
and human worth, was yet often envied, impugned,
and molested by those, whom by all manner of bene-
fits he had most highly obliged. And we find David Vid. Ps. iv.
"o.
frequently complaining, that by those, whose good-

156 *Of a peaceable Temper and Carriage.*

SERM. will, by performing all offices of friendly kindness
XXX. and brotherly affection, he had studiously laboured to deserve, whose maladies and calamities he had not only tenderly commiserated, but had prayed and humbled his soul with fasting for their recovery and deliverance from them, was yet recompensed by their treacherous devices against his safety, by grievous reproaches, and scornful insultings over him in his affliction; as we see at large in Psalms xxxv. and lxix. And in Psalm cxx. he thus lamentably bemoans his condition: *Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar: My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace: I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war.* And our blessed Saviour himself, though in the whole tenor of his life he demonstrated an incomparable meekness and sweetness of disposition, and exercised continually all manner of kindness and beneficence toward all men, was notwithstanding loaded with all kinds of injuries and contumelies, was bitterly hated, ignominiously disgraced, and maliciously persecuted unto death. And the same lot befell his faithful disciples, that although their design was benign and charitable, their carriage blameless and obliging toward all, they were yet pursued constantly both by the outrageous clamours of the people, and cruel usages from those in eminent power. Now though it seem strange and almost incredible, that they who are truly friends to all, and are ready to do to all what good they can; who willingly displease none, but industriously strive to acquire (not with glozing shows of popularity, but by real expressions of kindness) the goodwill and favour of all, should yet be maligned, or

molested by any; yet seeing it so happens, if we inquire into the reason, we shall find this miracle in SERM. XXX. morality to proceed (to omit the neglect of the duties mentioned in our former discourse) chiefly from the exceeding variety, difference, and contrariety of men's dispositions, joined with the morosity, aptness to mistake, envy, or unreasonable perverseness of some; which necessarily render the means of attaining all men's good-will insufficient, and the endeavours unsuccessful. For men seeing by several lights, relishing with diversely disposed palates, and measuring things by different standards, we can hardly do or say any thing, which, if approved and applauded by some, will not be disliked and blamed by others; if it advance us in the opinion of some, will not as much depress us in the judgment of others; so that in this irreconcileable diversity and inconsistency of men's apprehensions, it is impossible not to displease many; especially since some men either by their natural temper, or from the influence of some sour principles they have imbibed, are so morose, rigid, and self-willed; so impatient of all contradiction to, or discrepancy from their sentiments, that they cannot endure any to dissent in judgment, or vary in practice from them, without incurring their heavy disdain and censure. And, which makes the matter more desperate and remediless, such men commonly being least able either to manage their reason or to command their passion, as guided wholly by certain blind impulses of fancy, or groundless prejudices of conceit, or by a partial admiration of some men's persons, examples, and authorities, are usually most resolute and peremptory in their courses, and thence hardly capa-

SERM. ble of any change, mitigation, or amendment. Of
XXX. which sort there being divers engaged in several ways, it is impossible to please some without disgusting the other; and difficult altogether to approach any of these wasps without being stung or vexed by them. Some also are so apt to misunderstand men's meanings, to misconstrue their words, and to make ill descants upon, or draw bad consequences from their actions, that it is not possible to prevent their entertaining ill-favoured prejudices against even those that are heartily their friends, and wish them the best. To others the good and prosperous estate of their neighbour, that he flourishes in wealth, power, or reputation, is ground sufficient of hatred and enmity against him: for so we see that Cain hated his innocent brother Abel, because his brother's works were more righteous, and his sacrifices better accepted, than his own; that Joseph's brethren were mortally offended at him, because his father especially loved and delighted in him; that Saul was enraged against David, because his gallant deeds were celebrated with due praises and joyful acclamations of the people; and that the Babylonian princes upon no other score maligned Daniel, but because he enjoyed the favour of the king, and a dignity answerable to his deserts. And who, that loves his own welfare, can possibly avoid such enmities as these? But the fatal rock, upon which peaceable designs are most inevitably split, and which by no prudent steering our course can sometimes be evaded, is the unreasonable perverseness of men's pretences, who sometimes will upon no terms be friends with us, or allow us their good-will, but upon condition of concurring with

them in dishonest and unwarrantable practices; of SERM. XXX.
omitting some duties, to which by the express com-
mand of God, or evident dictates of right reason, we
are obliged, or performing some action repugnant
to those indispensable rules. But though peace with
men is highly valuable, and possessing their good-
will in worth not inferior to any other indifferent
accommodation of life, yet are these nothing compa-
rable to the favour of God, or the internal satis-
faction of conscience; nor, though we were assured
thereby to gain the entire love and favour of all
men living, are we to purchase them at so dear a
rate, as with the loss of these. We must not, to
please or gratify men, commit any thing prohibited,
or omit any thing enjoined by God, the least glimpse
of whose favourable aspect is infinitely more to be
prized, than the most intimate friendship of the
mightiest monarchs upon earth; and the least spark
of whose indignation is more to be dreaded, than
the extremest displeasure of the whole world. In
case of such competition, we must resolve with St.
Paul, *Do I yet conciliate God, or do I endeavour* Gal. i. 10.
to soothe men? For if I yet soothed (or flattered)
men, (so you know ἀπέσκευ signifies,) *I were not*
the servant of Christ. Nor are we, that we may
satisfy any man's pleasure, to contravene the dic-
tates of reason, (that subordinate guide of our ac-
tions,) to do any dishonourable or uncomely action,
unworthy of a man, misbeseeming our education, or
incongruous to our station in human society, so as
to make ourselves worthily despicable to the most
by contenting some: nor are we bound always to
desert our own considerable interest, or betray our
just liberty, that we may avoid the enmity of such

SERM. as would violently or fraudulently encroach upon
XXX. them. Nor are we in the administration of justice, distribution of rewards, or arbitration of controversies, to respect the particular favour of any, but the merits only of the cause, or the worth of the persons concerned. Nor are we by feeding men's distempered humours, or gratifying their abused fancies, to prejudice or neglect their real good; to encourage them in bad practices, to foment their irregular passions, to applaud their unjust or uncharitable censures, or to puff up their minds with vain conceit by servile flattery: but rather, like faithful physicians, to administer wholesome, though unsavoury advice; to reveal to them their mistakes, to check their intended progress in bad courses, to reprove their faults seasonably, and when it may probably do them good, though possibly thereby we may provoke their anger and procure their ill-will,
Gal. iv. 16. and, as St. Paul saith, become their enemies, for telling them the truth. Nor are we ever explicitly to assent to falsehoods, (so apprehended by us,) to belie our consciences, or contradict our real judgments; (though we may sometimes for peace sake prudently conceal them;) nor to deny the truth our defence and patronage, when in order to some good purpose it needs and requires them, though thereby we may incur the dislike, and forfeit the good-will of some men. Nor are we by entertaining any extraordinary friendship, intimate familiarity, or frequent converse with persons notoriously dissolute in their manners, disorderly in their behaviour, or erroneous in weighty points of opinion, to countenance their misdemeanours, dishonour our profession, render ourselves justly suspected, run the hazard of

contagion, or hinder their reformation. And especially we are warily to decline the particular acquaintance of men of contentious dispositions, mischievous principles, and factious designs; a bare keeping company with whom looks like a conspiracy, an approving or abetting their proceedings; the refusing any encouragement, signification of esteem, or vouchsafing any peculiar respect to such, we owe to the honour of virtue, which they disgrace, to the love of truth, which they oppugn, to the peace of the world, which they disturb, and to the general good of mankind, which they impeach. And so St. Paul warns us not to *mingle* or consort, not to *diet* or *common* (*μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι*, and *μὴ ἀνατίκτειν*) with men of a dissolute and disorderly ^{Ἄνακτος} conversation: and, *to mark them which cause seditions, and scandals, contrary to Christian doctrine, and to shun or decline them*, (*ἐκκλίνειν ἀπ' αὐτῶν*) and to repudiate, deprecate the familiarity of heretics (*αἵρετικὸν ἄνθρωπον παρατεῖσθαι*). And St. John forbids us to *wish joy*, or to allow the ordinary respects of civil salutation to apostates and impostors; *lest* (by such demonstration of favour) *we communicate with them in their wicked works*. None of which precepts are intended to interdict to us, or to disoblige us from bearing real good-will, or dispensing needful benefits to any, but to deter us from yielding any signal countenance to vice and impiety; and to excite us to declare such dislike and detestation of those heinous enormities, as may confer to the reclaiming of these, and prevent the seduction of others. So St. Paul expressly, *But if any man obeyeth not our injunction by epistle, do not consort with him, that he may by shame be*

SERM.
XXX.

^{17.}
^{14, 15.}

SERM. *reclaimed* (*īra ērpaxī*): and, *Account him not an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.* Nor ought, lastly, the love of peace, and desire of friendly correspondence with any men, avert us from an honest zeal (proportionable to our abilities and opportunities) of promoting the concernments of truth and goodness, though against powerful and dangerous opposition; I say an honest zeal, meaning thereby not that blind, heady passion, or inflammation of spirit, transporting men beyond the bounds of reason and discretion, upon some superficially plausible pretences, to violent and irregular practices; but a considerate and steady resolution of mind, effectually animating a man by warrantable and decent means vigorously to prosecute commendable designs; like that St. Jude mentions, of *striving earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.* For this zeal may be very consistent with, yea, greatly conducible to, the designs of peace. And 'tis not a drowsiness, a slack remissness, a heartless diffidence, or a cowardly flinching from the face of danger and opposition, we discourse about, or plead for; but a wise and wary declining the occasions of needless and unprofitable disturbance to ourselves and others.

Jude 3.

To conclude this point, (which, if time would have permitted, I should have handled more fully and distinctly,) though to preserve peace, and purchase the good-will of men, we may and ought to quit much of our private interest and satisfaction, yet ought we not to sacrifice to them what is not our own, nor committed absolutely to our disposal, and which in value incomparably transcends them, the maintenance of truth, the advancement of justice, the practice of virtue, the quiet of our conscience, the favour of

Almighty God. And if, for being dutiful to God, SERM.
and faithful to ourselves in these particulars, any XXX.
men will hate, vex, and despite us; frustrate our de-
sires, and defeat our purposes of living peaceably
with all men in this world; we may comfort our-
selves in the enjoyment of eternal peace and satis-
faction of mind, in the assurance of the divine fa-
vour, in the hopes of eternal rest and tranquillity
in the world to come.

Now briefly to induce us to the practice of this
duty of living peaceably, we may consider,

1. *How good and pleasant a thing it is*, as David ^{Ps. cxxiii.}
saith, *for brethren* (and so we are all at least by na-
ture) *to live together in unity.* How that, as Solomon
saith, *better is a dry morsel and quietness there-* ^{Prov. xvii.}
*with, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.*¹ How delicious that conversation is, which is accom-
panied with a mutual confidence, freedom, courtesy,
and complacence: how calm the mind, how composed
the affections, how serene the countenance, how me-
lodious the voice, how sweet the sleep, how contentful
the whole life is of him, that neither deviseth mis-
chief against others, nor suspects any to be contrived
against himself; and contrariwise, how ingrateful and
loathsome a thing it is to abide in a state of enmity,
wrath, dissension; having the thoughts distracted
with solicitous care, anxious suspicion, envious re-
gret; the heart boiling with choler, the face over-
clouded with discontent, the tongue jarring and out
of tune, the ears filled with discordant noises of con-
tradiction, clamour, and reproach; the whole frame
of body and soul distempered and disturbed with the
worst of passions. How much more comfortable it
is to walk in smooth and even paths, than to wander

SERM. in rugged ways overgrown with briers, obstructed
XXX. with rubs, and beset with snares; to sail steadily in
a quiet, than to be tossed in a tempestuous sea; to
behold the lovely face of heaven smiling with a
cheerful serenity, than to see it frowning with clouds,
or raging with storms; to hear harmonious consents,
than dissonant janglings; to see objects correspondent
in graceful symmetry, than lying disorderly in con-
fused heaps; to be in health, and have the natural
humours consent in moderate temper, than (as it
happens in diseases) agitated with tumultuous com-
motions: how all senses and faculties of man unani-
mously rejoice in those emblems of peace, order, har-
mony, and proportion; yea, how nature universally
delights in a quiet stability, or undisturbed progress
of motion; the beauty, strength, and vigour of every
thing requires a concurrence of force, cooperation,
and contribution of help; all things thrive and

Vid. Clem.
ad Cor. p.
27, &c.
flourish by communicating reciprocal aid, and the
world subsists by a friendly conspiracy of its parts;
and especially that political society of men chiefly
aims at peace as its end, depends on it as its cause,
relies on it as its support. How much a peaceful

Rev. xxi. state resembles heaven, into which neither *complaint*,
pain, nor *clamour* (*οὐτε πένθος, οὐτε πόνος, οὐτε κραυγὴ*,
as it is in the Apocalypse) do ever enter; but blessed
souls converse together in perfect love, and in per-
petual concord: and how a condition of enmity re-
presents the state of hell, that black and dismal
region of dark hatred, fiery wrath, and horrible

Better is a
dinner of
herbs where
love is, than
a stalled ox
and hatred
therewith.
Prov. xv. 17.
'Αραιεῖσιν.
How like a paradise the world would be,
flourishing in joy and rest, if men would cheerfully
conspire in affection, and helpfully contribute to each
other's content: and how like a savage wilderness

now it is, when, like wild beasts, they vex and persecute, worry and devour each other. How not only SERM.
XXX. philosophy hath placed the supreme pitch of happiness in a calmness of mind, and tranquillity of life, void of care and trouble, of irregular passions and perturbations ; but that holy scripture itself in that one term of *peace* most usually comprehends all joy and content, all felicity and prosperity : so that the heavenly consort of angels, when they agree most highly to bless, and to wish the greatest happiness to mankind, could not better express their sense, than by saying, *Be on earth peace, and good will among men.* Luke ii. 14.

2. That as nothing is more sweet and delightful, so nothing more comely and agreeable to human nature than peaceable living, it being, as Solomon saith, *an honour to a man to cease from strife*; and consequently also a disgrace to him to continue therein : that rage and fury may be the excellencies of beasts, and the exerting their natural animosity in strife and combat may become them; but reason and discretion are the singular eminences of men, and the use of these the most natural and commendable method of deciding controversies among them : and that it extremely misbecomes them that are endowed with those excellent faculties so to abuse them, as not to apprehend each others' meanings, but to ground vexatious quarrels upon the mistake of them ; not to be able by reasonable expedients to compound differences, but with mutual damage and inconvenience to prorogue and increase them : not to discern how exceedingly better it is to be helpful and beneficial, than to be mischievous and troublesome to one another. How foolishly and unskilfully they judge,

SERM. that think by unkind speech and harsh dealing to
XXXI. allay men's distempers, alter their opinions, or re-
 move their prejudices; as if they should attempt to
 kill by ministering nourishment, or to extinguish a
 flame by pouring oil upon it. How childish a thing
 it is eagerly to contend about trifles, for the su-
 periority in some impertinent contest, for the satis-
 faction of some petty humour, for the possession of some
 inconsiderable toy; yea, how barbarous and brutish
 a thing it is, to be fierce and impetuous in the par-
 suit of things that please us, snarling at, biting, and
 tearing all competitors of our game, or opposers of
 our undertaking. But how divine and amiable, how
 worthy of human nature, of civil breeding, of pru-
 dent consideration it is, to restrain partial desires, to
 condescend to equal terms, to abate from rigorous
 pretences, to appease discords, and vanquish enmities
 by courtesy and discretion; like the best and wisest
 commanders, who by skilful conduct, and patient
 attendance upon opportunity, without striking of
 stroke, or shedding of blood, subdue their enemy.

Gal. v.

3. How that peace with its near alliance and con-
 comitants, its causes and effects, love, meekness, gen-
 tleness, and patience, are in sacred writ reputed the
 genuine fruits of the Holy Spirit, issues of divine
 grace, and offsprings of heavenly wisdom; produc-
 ing like themselves a goodly progeny of righteous
 deeds. But that emulation, hatred, wrath, vari-
 ance, and strife derive their extraction from fleshly
 lust, hellish craft, or beastly folly; propagating them-
 selves also into a like ugly brood of wicked works.

Jam. iii. 14 — 18. iv. 1.
 If ye have bitter seal and
 strife in your hearts, glory not, ^a nor be deceived
 untruly: This wisdom descendeth not from above,
^a Καὶ μὴ φιλοστρίτε καὶ τὰς ἔργας αὐτῶν.

but is earthly, sensual, and devilish: For where emulation and strife are, there is ^b tumult, and every ^c naughty thing: but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, ^d obsequious, full of mercy (or beneficence) and of good fruits, without partiality and dissimulation: And the fruit of righteousness is sowed in peace to those that make peace; And from whence are wars and quarrels among you? Are they not hence, even from your lusts, that war in your members? Likewise, *He loveth transgression that loveth strife*; and, *A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes*, saith Solomon. That the most wicked and miserable of creatures is described by titles denoting enmity and discord: *the hater* (Satan), *the enemy* (*ὁ ἔχθρος ἄρθρος τος*), *the accuser* (*ὁ κατηγόρος*), *the slanderer* (*ὁ διάβολος*), *the destroyer* (*ὁ ἀπολλύων*), the furious dragon, and mischievously treacherous snake: and how sad it is to imitate him in his practices, to resemble him in his qualities. But that the best, most excellent, and most happy of Beings delights to be styled, and accordingly to express himself, *The God of love, mercy, and peace*; and his blessed Son to be called, and to be, *The Prince of peace, the great Mediator, Reconciler, and Peacemaker*; who is also said from on high to have visited us, *to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; and to guide our feet in the ways of peace*. That, lastly, no devotion is pleasing, no oblation acceptable to God, conjoined with hatred, or proceeding from an unreconciled mind: for, *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there*

SERM. *thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be
XXX. reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer
thy gift,* saith our Saviour.

I close up all with this corollary: that if we must live lovingly and peaceably with all men, then much more are we obliged to do so with all Christians: to whom by nearer and firmer bands of holy alliance we are related; by more precious communions in faith and devotion we are endeared; by more peculiar and powerful obligations of divine commands, sacramental vows, and formal professions we are engaged: our spiritual brethren, members of the same mystical body, temples of the same Holy Spirit, servants of the same Lord, subjects of the same Prince, professors of the same truth, partakers of the same hope, heirs of the same promise, and candidates of the same everlasting happiness.

Now Almighty God, the most good and beneficent Maker, gracious Lord, and merciful Preserver of all things, infuse into our hearts those heavenly graces of meekness, patience, and benignity, grant us and his whole church, and all his creation to serve him quietly here, and in a blissful rest to praise and magnify him for ever: to whom, with his blessed Son, the great Mediator and Prince of peace, and with his holy Spirit, the overflowing spring of all love, joy, comfort, and peace, be all honour, glory, and praise. And,

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you for ever. Amen.

S E R M O N XXXI.*

THE DUTY AND REWARD OF BOUNTY TO THE POOR.

PSALM cxii. 9.

He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour.

AS this whole Psalm appears to have a double intent; one to describe the proper actions and affections of a truly religious or pious man; (of a man who feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commandments;) the other to declare the happiness of such a man's state, consequent upon those his affections and actions, whether in way of natural result, or of gracious recompence from God: so doth this verse particularly contain both a good part of a pious man's character, and some considerable instances of his felicity. The first words (*He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor*) express part of his character; the latter (*his righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour*) assign instances of his felicity. So that our text hath two parts, one affording us good information concerning our duty, the other yielding great

* This Sermon was preached at the Spital upon Wednesday in Easter-week, A. D. 1671.

S E R M. encouragement to the performance thereof; for we
XXXI. are obliged to follow the pious man's practice, and so doing we shall assuredly partake of his condition. These parts we shall in order prosecute, endeavouring (by God's assistance) somewhat to illustrate the words themselves, to confirm the truths couched in them, and to inculcate the duties which they imply.

For the first part, *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor*; these words in general do import the liberal bounty and mercy which a pious man is wont to exercise; doing which doth in good part constitute him pious, and signally declareth him such; is a necessary ingredient of his piety, and a conspicuous mark thereof. But particularly they insinuate some things concerning the nature, the matter, the manner, and the object of those acts.

He hath dispersed, he hath given. Those words being put indefinitely, or without determining what is dispersed and given by him, may be supposed to imply a kind of universality in the matter of his beneficence; that he bestoweth whatever he hath within compass of his possession, or his power; his *rà ixápxovra*, (the things which he hath,) and his *rà érvora*, (the things which he may,) according to the prescriptions of our Lord in the Gospel. Every thing, I say, which he hath in substance, or can do by his endeavour, that may conduce to the support of the life, or the health, or the welfare in any kind of his neighbour, to the succour or relief of his indigency, to the removal or easement of his affliction, he may well here be understood to disperse and give. Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, entertaining the stranger, ransoming the captive, easing the oppressed, comforting the sorrowful,

Luke xii.
33. xi. 41.

assisting the weak, instructing or advising the ignorant, together with all such kinds or instances of beneficence, may be conceived either meant directly as the matter of the good man's dispersing and giving, or by just analogy of reason reducible thereto: substantial alms, as the most sensible and obvious matter of bounty, was (it is probable) especially intended, but thence no manner of expressing it is to be excluded; for the same reasons which oblige us, the same affections which dispose us to bestow our money, or deal our bread, will equally bind and move us to contribute our endeavour and advice, for the sustenance and comfort of our poor neighbour. Answerably our discourse will more expressly regard the principal matter, liberal communication of our goods; but it may be referred to all sorts of beneficence.

Further, the word *dispersed* intimateth the nature of his bounty, in exclusion of practices different from it. He *disperseth*, and is therefore not tenacious, doth not hoard up his goods, or keep them close to himself, for the gratifying his covetous humour, or nourishing his pride, or pampering his sensuality; but sendeth them abroad for the use and benefit of others. He *disperseth* his goods, and therefore doth not fling them away altogether, as if he were angry with them, or weary of them, as if he loathed or despised them; but fairly and softly with good consideration he disposeth of them here and there, as reason and need do require. He *disperseth* them to *the poor*, not dissipateth them among vain or lewd persons in wanton or wicked profusions, in riotous excesses, in idle diversions, in expensive curiosities, in hazardous gamings, in any such courses which

SERM.
XXXI.

SERM. swallow whole all that a man hath, or do so cripple
XXXI. him, that he becomes unable to disperse any thing :
 our good man is to be understood wisely provident,
 honestly industrious, and soberly frugal, that he may
 have wherewith to be just first, and then liberal.

Eph. iv. 28. His *dispersing* also (or *scattering*, so the *Hebrew
 Prov. xi. 24. word here used is otherwhere rendered : *There is*,
 saith the Wise Man, *that scattereth, and yet increaseth* : where we may remark, that this word
 singly by itself, without any adjunct matter to limit
 or interpret it, is used to signify this kind of prac-
 tice. This his *dispersing*, I say, also) denotes the
 extent of the pious man's bounty, that it is very
 large and diffusive, and in a manner unrestrained ;
 that it reacheth to many places, and is withheld
 from no persons within the verge of his power and
 opportunity to do good. This practice commonly by
 a like phrase (unto which perhaps this word refers) is
 2 Cor. ix. termed *sowing* : *He*, saith St. Paul, *which soweth*
 6. 10. *Gal. vi. 7.* *sparingly shall also reap sparingly ; and he which*
 8. *Prov. xi. 18.* *soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully.* Now,
Prov. xi. 25. he that soweth, having chosen a good soil, and a fit
 season, doth not regard one particular spot, but throw-
 eth all about so much as his hand can hold, so far as
 the strength of his arm doth carry. It is likewise
 called *watering* ; (*He that watereth*, saith Solomon,
shall be watered himself;) which expression also
 seemeth to import a plentiful and promiscuous effu-
 sion of good, dropping in showers upon dry and
 parched places ; that is, upon persons dry for want,
 or parched with affliction. So the good man doth
 not plant his bounty in one small hole, or spout it on

* Οὐ γὰρ εἶν τε χρήματ' ἔχειν, μὴ ἐπιμελούμενον, δέκας ἔχει. Arist.
 Eth. iv. 1.

one narrow spot, but with an open hand disseminates SERM. it, with an impartial regard distils it all about. He XXXI. stints it not to his own family or relations; to his neighbours, or friends, or benefactors; to those of his own sect and opinion, or of his humour and disposition; to such as serve him, or oblige him, or please him; whom some private interest ties, or some particular affection endears him to; but scatters it indifferently and unconfinedly toward all men that need it; toward mere strangers, yea, toward known enemies; toward such who never did him any good, or can ever be able to do any; yea, even toward them who have done evil to him, and may be presumed ready to do more^b. Nothing in his neighbour but absence of need, nothing in himself but defect of ability, doth curb or limit his beneficence. In that ^{2 Cor. viii.} προθυμία, (that proclivity and promptitude of mind,) ^{12.} which St. Paul speaketh of, he doth good every ^{Ubicunque homo est,} where: wherever a man is, there is room for his ^{ibi benefi-} wishing well, and doing good, if he can: he observes ^{cio locus est. Sen. de Vit. B. cap.} that rule of the Apostle, *As we have opportunity,* ^{Gal. vi. 10.} *let us do good unto all men.* So the pious man ^{24.} ^{2 Cor. ix.} hath dispersed. It follows,

He hath given to the poor. These words denote the freeness of his bounty, and determine the principal object thereof: he not only lendeth (though he also doth that upon reasonable occasion; for, *A good* ^{Psal. cxii. 5.} *man,* as it is said before in this Psalm, *sheweth mercy, and lendeth;* and elsewhere, *The righteous* ^{Ps. xxxvii.} *is ever merciful, and lendeth;* he, I say, not only ^{26.} sometimes willingly lendeth) to those who in time

^b Εἰν τὸν τινὰ κακὸς πάσχοντα, μηδὲν περιεργάζουν λοιπόν· ἔχει τὸ δι-
καίωμα τῆς βοηθείας, τοῦ κακοῦ παθεῖν αὐτόν·—τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστι, καὶ Ἑλλην,
καὶ Ἰουδαῖος. Chrys. in Heb. Orat. 10.

SERM. may repay, or requite him; but he freely giveth to
XXXI. the poor, that is, to those from whom he can expect

Qui diviti donat, petit.
 He that giveth to the rich, he doth not (as good and
 pious, he doth not) present the rich: to do so is bet-
 eth to the rich shall a cleanly way of begging, or a subtile kind of trade;
 surely come it is hardly courtesy; it is surely no bounty; for
 to want.

Prov. xxii. 16. such persons (if they are not very sordid or very

careless, and such men are not usually much troubled
 with presents) will, it is likely, overdo him, or at
 least will be even with him in kindness. In doing
 this, there is little virtue; for it there will be small

Luke vi. 33. reward. For, *If you do good to them who do good
 34. to you,* (or whom you conceive able and disposed to

requite you,) νοίᾳ χάρις, what thanks are due to you?

For that, saith our Saviour, *even sinners* (even men
 notoriously bad) *do the same: And if you lend to
 them from whom you hope to receive, what thanks
 have you? For sinners even lend to sinners, to
 receive as much again.* All men commonly, the

bad no less than the good, are apt to be superfluously
 kind in heaping favours on those whom fortune be-
 friends, and whose condition requires not their cour-
 tesy; every one almost is ready to adopt himself into
 the kindred, or to screw himself into the friendship of
 the wealthy and prosperous ^c: but where kindred is
 of use, there it is seldom found; it is commonly so
 deaf, as not to hear when it is called; so blind, as
 not to discern its proper object and natural season,

Prov. xvii. 17. (*the time of adversity, for which a brother is born.*) Men disclaim alliance with the needy, and shun his

^c "Οταν δ' ὁ δαίμων εὖ διδῷ, τί χρὴ φίλων; Ἀρκεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὁ Θεὸς ἀφε-
 λεῖν θέλων. Eurip. in Orest.

Tῶν εὐτυχόντων πάντες εἰσὶ συγγενεῖς.

cquaintance ; so the Wise Man observed, *All the SERM. rethren of the poor do hate him ; how much more to his friends go far from him ?* Thus it is in vul- ^{Prov. ix. 7, 4.} ar practice : but the pious man is more judicious, ^{Ez 18. 13. 14. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 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SER M. his resolutions, may wilfully or negligently let slip
XXXI. the due season of performing it. Our good man is
Εὐελάθης Δάσον ἡγε-
μηρραλευτίς μὲν οὐ ταλ-
ταρεψίς οὐ
τὰν διαχί-
στατ.
Plut. in
PausoÆmil.
 not a *Dason*, or *Will-give*, (like that king of Macedon, who got that name from often signifying an intention of giving, but never giving in effect;) he not only purposes well, and promises fairly for the future, but he hath effectually done it, and perseveres doing it upon every fit occasion. He puts not his neighbour into tedious expectations, nor puts him off with frivolous excuses, saying to him, as it is in the Pro.
 Prov. iii. 28. verbs, *Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give*, when he hath it by him: he bids him not Jam. ii. 16. have patience, or says unto him, *Depart in peace*, when his need is urgent, and his pain impatient, when hunger or cold do then pinch him, when sickness incessantly vexeth him, when present straits and burdens oppress him; but he affordeth a ready, quick, and seasonable relief.

He hath dispersed, and given, while he lives, not reserving the disposal of all at once upon his death, or by his last will; that unwilling will, whereby men would seem to give somewhat, when they can keep nothing; drawing to themselves those commendations and thanks, which are only due to their mortality; wheras were they immortal, they would never be liberal: No; it is, *he hath freely dispersed*; not an inevitable necessity will extort it from him; Avarus, nisi it cannot be said of him, that he never does well, cum mori-
 tur, nil recte but when he dies; so he hath done it really and facit. *Laber.* surely.

He also doth it constantly, through all the course of his life, whenever good opportunity presents itself. He doth it not by fits, or by accident, according to unstable causes or circumstances moving him, (when

bodily temper or humour inclineth him, when a sad SERM.
object makes vehement impression on him, when _____
shame obligeth him to comply with the practice of
others, when he may thereby promote some design,
or procure some glory to himself,) but his practice is
constant and uniform, being drawn from steady prin-
ciples, and guided by certain rules, proceeding from
reverence to God, and good-will toward man, follow-
ing the clear dictates and immutable laws of con-
science. Thus hath the pious man *dispersed*, and
given to the poor: and let thus much suffice for ex-
planatory reflection upon the first words.

The main drift and purport of which is, to repre-
sent the liberal exercising of bounty and mercy to
be the necessary duty, the ordinary practice, and the
proper character of a truly pious man; so that per-
forming such acts is a good sign of true piety; and
omitting them is a certain argument of ungodliness.
For the demonstration of which points, and for ex-
citing us to a practice answerable, I shall propound
several considerations, whereby the plain reasonable-
ness, the great weight, the high worth and excellency
of this duty, together with its strict connection with
other principal duties of piety, will appear. And
first, I will shew with what advantage the holy scrip-
ture represents it to us, or presses it upon us.

1. We may consider, that there is no sort of duties ^{I. Head of discourse.} which God hath more expressly commanded, or more
earnestly inculcated, than these of bounty and mercy
toward our brethren: whence evidently the great
moment of them, and their high value in God's
esteem may be inferred. Even in the ancient law,
we may observe very careful provisions made for
engaging men to works of this kind, and the perform-

SER.M. ance of them is with huge life and urgency pre-
XXXI. scribed: *Thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut*
Deut. xv. 7. *thine hand from thy poor brother.—Thou shalt*
11. *open thy hand wide unto thy brother, unto thy poor,*
and to thy needy in the land. So did Moses, in
God's name, with language very significant and
emphatical, enjoin to the children of Israel. The
holy prophets also do commonly with an especial
heat and vigour press these duties, most smartly re-
proving the transgression or neglect of them; espe-
cially when they reclaim men from their wicked
courses, urging them seriously to return unto God
and goodness, they propose this practice as a singular
instance most expressive of their conversion, most
apt to appease God's wrath, most effectual to the re-
covery of his favour. *Wash you, saith God in Isaiah,*
Isa. i. 16. *make you clean; put away the evil of your doings*
17. *from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do*
well. So in general he exhorts to repentance: then
immediately he subjoins these choice instances there-
Isa. i. 17. *of: Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the*
18. *fatherless, plead for the widow.—Come now, then*
Jer. vii. 5, 6. *he adds, let us reason together: though your sins be*
as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though
they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
When Daniel would prescribe to king Nebuchad-
nezzar the best way of amendment, and the surest
means of averting God's judgments impendent on
Dan. iv. 27. him, he thus speaks: *Wherefore, O king, let my*
counsel be acceptable unto thee; break off thy sins
by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing
mercy to the poor^d. This he culled out as of all

^d Τὰς ἀμαρτίας τον ἐλεημοσίας λέγεται: so the LXX. render those words, reading, it seems, **רָמֶה** for **רָמַת**.

pious acts chiefly grateful to God, and clearly testifying repentance; and, *so very impious a person was alms able to justify*, says the Father thereupon^c. So also when God himself would declare what those acts are which render penitential devotions most agreeable to him, and most effectual, he thus expresseth his mind : *Is not this the fast which I have chosen ? Isa. lviii. 6.*
To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke ? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thine house ? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him ; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh ? Of so great consideration and moment was this sort of duties, even under that old dispensation of weakness, servility, and fear; so much tenderness of compassion and benignity did God exact even from that hardhearted and worldly people, who were so little capable of the best rules, and had encouragements, in comparison, so mean toward performances of this nature. The same we may well conceive, under the more perfect discipline of universal amity, of ingenuity, of spiritual grace and goodness, in a higher strain, with more force and greater obligation to be imposed on us, who have so much stronger engagements, and immensely greater encouragements to them. And so indeed it is: for those precepts delivered by our Lord, *Sell all that you have, and give alms ; If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor ; Give to every man that asketh thee ; Treasure not up to yourselves treasures upon the earth*, do indeed sound

^c Ναθουχδωστορ, τὸν τοιότον δοεῖθη, ἵσχυσεν ἡ ἀλημοσύνη δικαιῶσαι.
Athan. ad Antioch. Quæst. 87.

SERM.
XXXI.

Luke xii.

33. vi. 30.

xi. 41.

Matt. xix.

21. vi. 19.

SERM. high, but are not insignificant or impertinent. They
XXXI. cannot signify or design less, than that we should be always, in affection and disposition of mind, ready to part with any thing we have for the succour of our poor brethren ; that to the utmost of our ability (according to moral estimation prudently rated) upon all occasions we should really express that disposition in our practice ; that we are exceedingly obliged to the continual exercise of these duties in a very eminent degree. These indeed were the duties which our Lord, as he did frequently in his discourse commend and prescribe, so he did most signally exemplify in his practice ; his whole life being in effect but one continual act of most liberal bounty and mercy toward mankind ; in charity to whom he outdid his own severest rules, being content never to possess any wealth, never to enjoy any ease in this world. And therein (both as to doctrine and practice) did the holy apostles closely follow their Master : *As poor, yet enriching many ; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.* So they throughly in deeds practised these duties, which in words they taught and earnestly pressed ; admonishing their converts to *distribute to the necessities of the saints, to do good to all men ; to do good, and to communicate not to forget ; to shew mercy with cheerfulness, to put on bowels of mercy ; to be kind and tender-hearted one toward another ; to abound in the grace of liberality.* Such are their directions and injunctions to all Christian people ; so did they preach themselves, and so they enjoined others to preach. *Charge the rich in this world, saith St. Paul to his scholar Timothy, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to*

² Cor. vi.
10.

Rom. xii.

13.

Gal. vi. 10.

Heb. xiii.

16.

Coloss. iii.

12.

Eph. iv. 32.

² Cor. viii.

7.

1 Tim. vi.

17, 18.

communicate; and, *These things*, saith he likewise, SERM. advising bishop Titus, *I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which believe in God may be careful to maintain good works*; what good works he meaneth, the reason adjoined doth shew; *For these things*, saith he, *are good and profitable unto men.*

2. It is indeed observable, that as in every kind that which is most excellent doth commonly assume to itself the name of the whole kind; so among the parts of righteousness (which word is used to comprehend all virtue and goodness) this of exercising bounty and mercy is peculiarly called *righteousness*; so that *righteousness* and *mercifulness*, (or *alms-deeds*,) the righteous and bountiful person, are in scripture expression ordinarily confounded, as it were, or undistinguishably put one for the other; it being often, when commendations are given to righteousness, and rewards promised to righteous persons, hard to discern, whether the general observance of God's law, or the special practice of these duties, are concerned in them. Likewise works of this nature are in way of peculiar excellency termed *good works*; and to perform them is usually styled, *to do good*, and *to do well*; (^aἀγαθὸν ἐργάζεσθαι, ^bκαλὸν ποιεῖν, ^cἀγαθοεργεῖν, ^dἀγαθοποιεῖν, ^eεὐποιεῖν, ^fεὐεργετεῖν, are words applied to this purpose;) which manners of expression do argue the eminent dignity of these performances.

^a Acts ix.
^b Tit. v.
^c Tit. iii. 8.
^d Cor. ix. 8.
^e Gal. vi. 9.
^f Ib. 10.

3. We may also consequently mark, that in those places of scripture where the divine law is abridged, and religion summed up into a few particulars of main importance, these duties constantly make a part: so when the prophet Micah briefly reckons

^{14.}
^{15.}
^{16.}
Heb. xiii.
Acts x. 38.

SERM. up those things which are best in the law, and
XXXI. chiefly required by God, the whole catalogue of
them consisting but of three particulars, *mercy*
Micah vi. 8. comes in for one; *He hath shewed thee, O man,*
saith he, *what is good: and what doth the Lord*
require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with thy God? Likewise of
those (*βαρύτερα τοῦ νόμου*, those) more substantial and
weighty things of God's law, the neglect of which
our Saviour objecteth as an argument of impiety,
and a cause of woe, to those pretending zealots, this
Matt. xxiii. is one: *Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hy-*
^{23.} *pocrites; for ye pay tithe of mint and cummin,*
and have omitted the weightier matters of the law,
judgment, mercy, and faith. The sum of St. John
the Baptist's instruction of the people is by St. Luke
Luke iii. 10, reduced to this point; *The people asked him, say-*
^{11.} *ing, What shall we do? He answering saith unto*
them, *He that hath two coats, let him impart to*
him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let
him do likewise. St. James's system of religion is
Jam. i. 27. this: *Pure and undefiled religion before God and*
the Father is this; to visit the fatherless and
widow in their affliction, (that is, to comfort and re-
lieve all distressed and helpless persons,) *and to keep*
himself unspotted from the world. St. Paul seems
Gal. vi. 2. to be yet more compendious and close: *Bear ye,*
saith he, *one another's burdens, and so fulfil the*
law of Christ. Yea, God himself compriseth all the
substantial part of religion herein, when, comparing
Hos. vi. 6. it with the circumstantial part, he saith, *I will have*
mercy, and not sacrifice.

4. It is in like manner considerable, that in the general descriptions of piety and goodness, the prac-

tice of these duties is specified as a grand ingredient SERM.
of them. In this Psalm, where such a description XXXI.
is intended, it is almost the only particular instance ;
and it is not only mentioned, but reiterated in divers
forms of expression. In the 37th Psalm it is af-
firmed and repeated, that *the righteous sheweth* Ps. xxxvii.
mercy ; he sheweth mercy, and giveth ; he sheweth 21, 26.
mercy, and lendeth. In the Proverbs it is a com- The right-
mendation of the virtuous woman, *whose price is far* eous giveth,
above rubies, that she stretcheth out her hand to and spareth
the poor, yea, stretcheth forth both her hands to the not. Prov.
needy. And in Ezekiel, (which is especially re- xxii. 26.
markable,) the 18th chapter, where the principal things constituting a pious man are more than once professedly enumerated, this among a very few other particulars is expressed, and taketh up much room in the account ; of such a person (who *shall surely live, and not die*, that is, who certainly shall abide in God's favour, and enjoy the happy consequences thereof) it is supposed, that he *neither hath op-* Ezek. xviii.
pressed any, nor hath withholden the pledge, nor 7, 16.
hath spoiled by violence ; but hath given his bread to
the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a gar- ment, and hath taken off his hand from the poor.

5. Also in the particular histories of good men his sort of practice is specially taken notice of, and expressed in their characters. In the story of our father Abraham, his benignity to strangers, and hospitableness, is remarkable among all his deeds of goodness, being propounded to us as a pattern and encouragement to the like practice. In this the conscience of Job did solace itself, as in a solid assurance of his integrity : *I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none* Job xxix. 12, 13, 15, 16.

SERM. *to help him. The blessing of him that was ready*
XXXI. *to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's*
heart to sing. I was eyes to the blind, and feet I

Job xxx.
25.

was to the lame; I was a father to the poor. Did
not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not
my soul grieved for the poor? Hence also did the

Luke xix.
8, 9.

good publican recommend himself to the favour and
approbation of our Saviour, saying, Behold, Lord,
half of my goods I give to the poor: hence did
salvation come to his house: hence he is proclaimed,
a son of Abraham. Of Dorcas, that good woman, who

Acts ix. 36.

was so gracious and precious among the disciples,
this is the commendation and character; She was full
of good works and almsdeeds, which she did; such
practice made her capable of that favour, so great and
extraordinary, the being restored to life; at least in
St. Chrysostom's judgment: The force of her alms,
said he, did conquer the tyranny of death¹. Cornelius also,
that excellent person, who was, though
a Gentile, so acceptable to God, and had so extra-
ordinary graces conferred on him, is thus represented;

Acts x. 2.

He was a devout man, and one that feared God,
with all his house; who gave much alms to the

¹Tim. iii. 2.
Tit. i. 8.

people, and prayed to God alway. We may add,
that to be hospitable (one branch of these duties,
and inferring the rest) is reckoned a qualification of
those who are to be the guides and patterns of good-
ness unto others. And particularly, one fit to be
promoted to a widow's office in the church is thus
described; Well reported of for good works; if she

¹ Tim. v.
10.

have brought up children; if she have lodged
strangers; if she have washed the saints' feet; if

¹ Η τῇς ἀληματίῃς δύναμις ἐπίκρησε θανάτου τὴν τυραννίδα. Chrys.
in Gen. Orat. 55.

she have relieved the afflicted; if she have diligently followed every good work. SERM. XXXI.

6. So near to the heart of piety doth the holy scripture lay the practice of these duties: and no wonder; for it often expressly declares charity to be the fulfilling of God's law, as the best expression of all our duty toward God, of faith in him, love and reverence of him, and as either formally containing, or naturally producing all our duty toward our neighbour. And of charity, works of bounty and mercy are both the chief instances and the plainest signs: for whereas all charity doth consist either in mental desire, or in verbal signification, or in effectual performance of good to our neighbour; this last is the end, the completion, and the assurance of the rest. Good-will is indeed the root of charity; but that lies under ground, and out of sight; nor can we conclude its being or life without visible fruits of beneficence. Good words are at best but fair leaves thereof, such as may, and too often do, proceed from a weak and barren disposition of mind. But these *good works* are *real fruits*, (so St. Paul calls them; *Let ours also, saith he, learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful,*) which declare a true life, and a good strength of charity in the bearer of them: by them τὸ γῆρας τῆς ἀγάπης, ^{Exodus. Greg. Nysa. in Matt. v. 7.} *the sincerity (or genuineness) of our charity is proved.* For as no man ever doth impress a false stamp on the finest metal; so costly charity is seldom counterfeit. It is to decline spending their goods or their pains, that men forge and feign; pretending to make up in wishing well, the defect of doing so, and paying words instead of things: but he that freely imparts what he hath, or can do for his neighbour's

Gal. v. 14.
Rom. xiii.
¹ Tim. i. 5.
Matt. vii.
¹²
Tit. iii. 14.
Rom. xv.
²⁸
Phil. iv. 17.
² Cor. viii. 8.

SER.M. good, needs no other argument to evince that he loves
XXXI. in good earnest, nor can indeed well use any other :
 for words, if actions are wanting, seem abusive ;
 and if actions are present, they are superfluous.

^{1 John iii.} _{18.} Wherefore St.John thus advises ; *My little children, let us not love in word, or in tongue, (αλλ' ἐργῷ) but in work and in truth.* To love in *work*, and to love in *truth*, he signifies to be the same thing ; and to pretend love in speech, without practising it in deed, he implies not allowable. And St. James in way of comparison says, that as faith without works is dead, so love without beneficence is useless. For,

^{James ii.} _{15, 16, 17.} *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto him, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit ? Even so faith without works is dead.* Cold wishes of good, working no real benefit to our neighbour, and a faint assent unto truth, producing no constant obedience to God, are things near of kin, and of like value ; both of little worth or use. Charity then being the main point of religion, mercy and bounty being the chief parts of charity, well may these duties be placed in so high a rank, according to the divine heraldry of scripture.

7. To enforce which observations, and that we may be further certified about the weight and worth of these duties, we may consider, that to the observance of them most ample and excellent rewards are assigned ; that, in return for what we bestow on our poor brethren, God hath promised all sorts of the best mercies and blessings to us. The best of all ^{Ps. lxiii. 3.} good things, (that which in David's opinion was better

than life itself,) the fountain of all blessings, (God's SERM. love and favour, or mercy,) is procured thereby, or XXXI. is annexed to it. For, *God loveth a cheerful giver*, 2 Cor. ix. 7. saith St. Paul; and, *The merciful shall obtain mercy*, Matt. v. 7. saith our Saviour: and, *Mercy rejoiceth against judgment*, James ii. 13. (*or boasteth, and triumpheth over it; ἔλεος κατακαυχᾶται κρίσεως*: that is, it appeaseth God's wrath, and prevents our condemnation and punishment,) saith St. James; God will not continue displeased Matt. vi. 14. with him, nor will withhold his mercy from him, who is kind and merciful to his neighbour. It is true, if rightly understood, what the Hebrew Wise Man saith, *Water will quench a flaming fire, and alms maketh an atonement for sins*. For this practice hath the nature and name of a sacrifice, and is declared as such both in excellency and efficacy to surpass all other sacrifices; to be most acceptable to God, most available for expiation of guilt, most effectual in obtaining mercy and favour. Other sacrifices performed in obedience to God's appointment (on virtue of our Lord's perfect obedience, and with regard to his pure sacrifice of himself) did in their way propitiate God, and atone sin: but this hath an intrinsic worth, and a natural aptitude to those purposes. Other obligations did signify a willingness to render a due homage to God: this really and immediately performs it. They were shadows or images well resembling that duty, (parting with any thing we have for the sake of God, and for purchasing his favour,) whereof this is the body and substance. This is therefore preferred as in itself excelling the rest, and more estimable in God's sight; so that in comparison or competition therewith, the other seem to be slighted and rejected. *I will*, saith Hos. vi. 6.

Ecclus. iii.
 30. Si nudum
 vestias, te-
 ipsum in-
 duis justi-
 tiam. Ambr.
 Offic. i. 11.
 Hier. in
 Psalm.
 cxxxiii.
 Chrys. tom.
 v. Orat. 55.

SERM. God, have mercy, and not sacrifice : and, *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ?* Will he ? that is, he will not be pleased with such sacrifices, if they be abstracted from the more delightful sacrifices of bounty and mercy. God never made an exception against these, or derogated from them in any case : they absolutely and perpetually are, as St. Paul Phil. iv. 18. speaketh, *odours of a sweet swell, sacrifices acceptable and well-pleasing to God.* And the apostle Heb. xiii. 16. to the Hebrews seconds him : *To do good, saith he, and to communicate, forget not ; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* By these, all other Luke xi. 41. works and all enjoyments are sanctified : for, *Give alms, saith our Lord, of what ye have ; and, behold, all things are pure unto you.* Such charitable persons are therefore frequently pronounced blessed, that is, in effect instated in a confluence of all good things. Psal. xli. 1. *Blessed is he that considereth the poor,* says the Prov. xxii. Psalmist ; and, *He that hath a bountiful eye is blessed,* saith Solomon ; and, *He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he,* saith the Wise Man again ; Matt. v. 7. and, *Blessed are the merciful,* saith our Lord himself. So in gross and generally. Particularly also and in retail, the greatest blessings are expressly allotted to this practice ; prosperity in all our affairs Deut. xv. 10. is promised thereto. *Thou, saith Moses, shalt surely give thy poor brother, and thine heart shall not be grieved that thou givest unto him ; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.* Stability in a good condition is ordinarily consequent thereon : so the prophet Daniel implies, when, advising king Nebuchadnezzar to these works,

he adds, *If it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.* Deliverance from evil incumbent, protection in imminent danger, and support in afflictions, are the sure rewards thereof : so the Psalmist assures us : *Blessed, saith he, is he that considereth the poor : the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.* ^{Psal. xli. 1, 2, 3.} *The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon earth ; and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.* *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing ; thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.* Security from all want is likewise a recompense proper thereto : for, *He that giveth to the poor shall not lack,* saith the Wise Man. *If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light arise in obscurity,* &c. Thriving in wealth and estate is another special reward : for, *The liberal soul shall be made fat;* the same author ^{Prov. xxviii. 27.} gives us his word for it. Even of the good things here below, to those who for his sake in this or any other way do *let go houses or lands,* our Lord promiseth the return of *a hundredfold,* either in kind ^{Matt. xix. 29.} or in value. So great encouragements are annexed to this practice even in relation to the concerns of this transitory life : but to them beside God hath destinated rewards incomparably more considerable and precious, spiritual and eternal rewards, treasures of heavenly wealth, crowns of endless glory, the perfection of joy and bliss to be dispensed *at the resurrection of the just.* *He that for my sake hath left houses or lands, shall receive a hundredfold now at this time, (or in this present life,) and in the world to come shall inherit everlasting life ;* so infallible truth hath assured us. They who perform these

Luke xiv.

Matt. xix.

Mark x. 29.

30.

SER.M. duties are said to *make themselves bags which wax not old, a treasure that faileth not in the heavens;*
XXXI. Luke xii. to *make themselves friends of the unrighteous mammon, who, when they fail, (when they depart, and leave their earthly wealth,) will receive them into everlasting habitations; to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* Such rewards are promised to the observers.
33. xvi. 9.
1 Tim. vi. 19.

8. And correspondently grievous punishments are designed and denounced to the transgressors of these duties; the worst of miseries is their portion and doom: they, for being such, do forfeit God's love and favour; they lose his blessing and protection; they can have no sure possession, nor any comfortable enjoyment of their estate; for *He*, saith St. James ii. *James, shall have judgment without mercy, who sheweth no mercy.* And of such a person it is said 13. Job xx. 18. in Job, *That which he laboureth for he shall restore, and shall not swallow it down: according to his substance shall the restitution be, and he shall not rejoice therein; because he hath oppressed, and forsaken the poor.* (Not only because he hath unjustly oppressed, but because he hath uncharitably forsaken the poor.) If by the divine forbearance such persons do seem to enjoy a fair portion in this life, (*prospering in the world, and increasing in riches,*) they will find a sad reckoning behind in the other world: this will be the result Ps. xvii. 14. lxxviii. 12. Luke vi. 24. of that audit; *Woe be unto you, rich men, for ye have received your consolation;* (such rich men are meant, who have got, or kept, or used their wealth basely; who have detained all the consolation it yields to themselves, and imparted none to others;)

and, *Remember, son, thou didst receive thy good things in this life;* (so didst receive them, as to swallow them, and spend them here, without any provision or regard for the future in the use of them;) and, *Cast that unprofitable servant* (who made no good use of his talent) *into utter darkness.* Such will be the fate of *every one that treasures up to himself, and is not rich unto God;* not rich in piety and charity, not rich in performing for God's sake works of bounty and mercy.

9. It is indeed most considerable, that at the final reckoning, when all men's actions shall be strictly scanned, and justly sentenced according to their true desert, a special regard will be had to the discharge or neglect of these duties. It is the bountiful and merciful persons, who have relieved Christ in his poor members and brethren, who in that day will appear to be the sheep at the right hand, and shall hear the good Shepherd's voice uttering those joyful words, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.* He doth not say, because you have made goodly professions, because you have been orthodox in your opinions, because you have frequented religious exercises, (have prayed often and long, have kept many fasts, and heard many sermons,) because you have been staunch in your conversations, because you have been punctual in your dealings, because you have maintained a specious guise of piety,

SER M. sobriety, and justice; (although, indeed, he that will
XXXI. come off well at that great trial, must be responsible, and able to yield a good account in respect to all those particulars;) but because you have been charitably benign and helpful to persons in need and distress, therefore blessed are you, therefore enter into the kingdom of glorious bliss prepared for such persons. This proceeding more than intimates, that, in the judgment of our Lord, no sort of virtue or good practice is to be preferred before that of charitable bounty; or rather that, in his esteem, none is equal thereto: so that if the question were put to him, which is one of them to Antiochus, (in Athanasi-
 us, tom. ii.) which is the most eminent virtue? our Lord would resolve it no otherwise than is done by that father, affirming, that mercifulness is the queen of virtues; for that, at the final account, the examination chiefly proceeds upon that; it is made the special touchstone of piety, and the peculiar ground of happiness. On the other side, those who have been deficient in these performances (uncharitable and unmerciful persons) will at the last trial appear to be the wretched goats on the left hand, unto whom this uncomfortable speech shall

Matt. xxv. 41, 42, 43. by the great Judge be pronounced; *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.* It is not, we may see, for having done that which in this world is called rapine or wrong, for having pillaged or czened their neighbour, for having committed adul-

tery or murder, or any other thing prohibited, that SERM. these unhappy men are said to be formally impeach- XXXI. ed, and finally condemned to that miserable doom ; but for having been unkind and unmerciful to their poor brethren^s : this at that high tribunal will pass for a most enormous crime, for the capital offence ; for this it is that they shall be cursed, and cast down into a wretched consortship with those malicious and merciless fiends, unto whose disposition they did so nearly approach.

Thus it appears how mighty a stress God in the holy scripture doth lay upon these duties, so peremptorily commanding them, so vehemently pressing them, so highly commanding them, so graciously by promises alluring us to the performance, so dreadfully by threatenings deterring us from the neglect of them. What an affront then will it be to God's authority, what a distrust to his word, what a contempt of his power, his justice, his wisdom, what a despite to his goodness and mercy, if, notwithstanding all these declarations of his will and purposes, we shall presume to be uncharitable in this kind ! There are also considerations, (very many, very clear, and very strong,) which discover the great reasonableness and equity of these laws, with our indispensable obligation to obey them ; the which indeed with greater force do exact these duties from us, and do more earnestly plead in the poor man's behalf, than he can beg or cry. If we either look up unto God, or down upon our poor neighbour, if we reflect upon ourselves, or consider our wealth itself,

^s Οὐκ ὅτι διηρέασιν, οὐδὲ ὅτι σεσυλήκασιν, οὐ μεμοιχεύκασιν, ἢ ἄλλο τι τῶν ἀπηγορευμένων πεποιήκασιν, ταύτην τὴν τάξιν κατακριθέντες, ἀλλ' ὅτι μὴ Χριστὸν διὰ τῶν δεομένων τεθεραπεύκασιν. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16.

SERM. every where we may discern various reasons obliging us, and various motives inducing us to the practice of these duties.

II. Head
of dis-
course.

In regard to God,

1. We may consider, that, by exercising of bounty and mercy, we are kind and courteous to God himself; by neglecting those duties, we are unkind and rude to him: for that what of good or evil is by us done to the poor, God interprets and accepts as done to himself. The poor have a peculiar relation to God; he openly and frequently professeth himself their especial friend, patron, and protector; he is much concerned in, and particularly chargeth his providence with their support. In effect therefore they shall surely be provided for, one way or other;

Pa. xxii. 26. (The poor shall eat and be satisfied: God will xviii. 27. xlvi. 9. save the afflicted people: The Lord preserveth the strangers, he relieth the fatherless and wi-

lisa. xli. 17. dow. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them:) but out of goodness to us, he chooseth, (if it may be, we freely concurring therein,) and best liketh, that it should be done by our hands; this conducing no less to our benefit, than to theirs; we thereby having opportunity to shew our respect to himself, and to lay an engagement on him to do us good. God therefore lendeth the poor man his own name, and alloweth him to crave our succour for his sake. (When the poor man asketh us in God's name, or for God's sake, he doth not usurp or forge, he hath good authority, and a true ground for doing so:) God gives him credit from himself unto us for what he wants,

and bids us charge what he receiveth on his own SERM.
account; permitting us to reckon him obliged there-
by, and to write him our debtor; engaging his own
word and reputation duly to repay, fully to satisfy
us. *He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the* Prov. xix.
Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay ^{17.}
him again, saith the Wise Man: and, *Inasmuch* Matt. xxv.
as ye have done it to the least of my brethren, ye ^{40, 45.}
have done it unto me, saith our Saviour: and, *God* Heb. vi. 10.
is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour
of love, which ye have shewed toward his name,
in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do
minister, saith the apostle. What therefore we
give to the poor, God accepteth as an expression of
kindness to himself, being given to one of his friends
and clients, in respect to him; he regards it as a
testimony of friendly confidence in him, signifying
that we have a good opinion of him, that we take
him for able and willing to requite a good turn,
that we dare take his word, and think our goods
safe enough in his custody. But if we stop our
ears, or shut our hands from the poor, God inter-
prets it as a harsh repulse, and an heinous affront
put upon himself: we doing it to one who bears his
name, and wears his livery, (for the poor man's rags
are badges of his relation unto God,) he thereby
judges, that we have little good-will, little respect,
little compassion toward himself: since we vouch-
safe not to grant him so mean a favour, since we
refuse at his request, and (as it were) in his need,
to accommodate him with a small sum, he justly
reputes it as an argument of unkindly diffidence in
him, that we have sorry thoughts of him, deeming
him no good correspondent, little valuing his word,

SERM. suspecting his goodness, his truth, or his suffi-
XXXI. ciency.

2. We by practising those duties are just, by omitting them are very unjust toward God. For our goods, our wealth, and our estate are indeed none of them simply or properly our own, so that we have an absolute property in them, or an entire disposal of them: no, we are utterly incapable of such a right unto them, or power over them: God necessarily is the true and absolute proprietary of them. They are called the gifts of God: but we must not understand that God, by giving them to us, hath parted with his own right to them: they are deposited with us in trust, not alienated from him; they are committed to us as stewards, not transferred upon us as masters: they are so ours, that we have no authority to use them according to our will or fancy, but are obliged to manage them according to God's direction and order. He, by right immutable, is Lord paramount of all his creation; every thing unalienably belongs to him upon many accounts. He out of nothing made all things at first, and to every creature through each moment a new being is conferred by his preservative influence: originally therefore he is Lord of all things, and continually a new title of dominion over every thing springeth up unto him: it is his always, because he always maketh it. We ourselves are naturally mere slaves and vassals to him: as we can never be our own, (masters of ourselves, of our lives, of our liberties,) so cannot we ever properly be owners of any thing; there are no possible means, by which we can acquire any absolute title to the least mite; the principal right to what we seem to get,

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Eccles. v.
19. vi. 2.

according to all law and reason, accrueth to our SERM. master. All things about us, by which we live, with XXXI. which we work and trade, the earth which supports <sup>Ps. xxiv. 1.
l. 12.</sup> and feeds us, and furnisheth us with all commodi-<sup>Ixxxix. 11.
xcv. 5.</sup>ties, the air we breathe, the sun and stars which cherish our life, are all of them his, his productions and his possessions, subsisting by his pleasure, subject to his disposal. How then can any thing be ours ? How can we say, with the foolish churl Nabal, *Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh, and give it ?* Thine ? O inconsiderate man ! How camest thou by it ? How dost thou hold it ? Didst thou make it ? Or dost thou preserve it ? Canst thou claim any thing by nature ? No ; thou broughtest nothing with thee into the world ; thou didst not bring thyself hither ^b. Canst thou challenge any thing to thyself from chance ? No, for there is no such thing as chance, all things being guided and governed by God's providence. Dost thou conceive thy industry can entitle thee to any thing ? Thou art mistaken ; for all the wit and strength thou appliest, the head thou contrivest with, and the hands thou workest with, are God's ; all the success thou findest did wholly depend on him, was altogether derived from him ; all thy projects were vain, all thy labours would be fruitless, did not he assist and bless thee. Thou dost vainly and falsely *lift up thine heart, and forget the Lord Deut. viii.
thy God, whenas thy herds and flocks multiply,* <sup>13, 14, 17,
18.</sup> *and thy silver and gold is multiplied, and all that*

^b Sed ais, Quid injustum est, si cum aliena non invadam, propria diligentius servem ? O impudens dictum ! propria dicis ? quæ ex quibus reconditis in hunc mundum detulisti ? *Ambros.*

SERM. *thou hast is multiplied ; if thou sayest in thy heart,*
XXXI. *My power, and the might of my hand, hath gotten me this wealth. But thou must remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth. [——Who am I, saith David, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort ? For all things come of thee; and of thine own have we given thee. 1 Chron. xxix. 14.]* Since then upon all scores every thing we have doth appertain to God, he may without any injury recall or resume whatever he pleaseth ; and while he letteth any thing abide with us, we cannot justly use it otherwise than he hath appointed, we cannot duly apply it otherwise than to his interest and serviceⁱ. God then having enjoined, that after we have satisfied our necessities, and supplied our reasonable occasions, we should employ the rest to *Luke iii. 11.* the relief of our poor neighbours ; that *if we have two coats, (one more than we need,) we should impart one to him that hath none ; if we have meat abundant, that we likewise communicate to him that wants it^k :* God, by the poor man's voice, (or by his need and misery,) demanding his own from us, we are very unjust if we presume to withhold it ; doubly unjust we are, both toward God and toward our neighbour : we are unfaithful stewards, misappling the goods of our Master, and crossing his

ⁱ *Aliena rapere convincitur, qui ultra necessaria sibi retinere probatur. Hieron.*

^k *Quicquid Deus plusquam opus est dederit, non nobis speci-aliter dedit, sed per nos aliis erogandum transmisit ; quod si non dederimus, res alienas invasimus. Aug. Serm. 219. de Temp.*

Proprium nemo dicat quod commune ; plus quam sufficeret sumptui violenter obtentum est. Ambros.

order¹: we are wrongful usurpers, detaining from SERM.
our neighbour that which God hath allotted him; XXXI.
we are in the court of conscience; we shall appear
at the bar of God's judgment no better than robbers,
(under wizards of legal right and possession,) spoiling
our poor brother of his goods; his, I say, by the
very same title as any thing can be ours, by the free
donation of God, fully and frequently expressed, as
we have seen, in his holy word. (He cannot take it
away by violence or surreption against our will, but
we are bound willingly to yield it up to him; to do
that, were disorder in him; to refuse this, is wrong
in us.) 'Tis the hungry man's bread which we hoard
up in our barns, 'tis his meat on which we glut, and
his drink which we guzzle^m: 'tis the naked man's
apparel which we shut up in our presses, or which
we exorbitantly ruffle and flaunt in: 'tis the needy
person's gold and silver which we closely hide in
our chests, or spend idly, or put out to useless use.
We are in thus holding, or thus spending, truly *πλε-*
σκέται, not only covetous, but wrongful, or havers of
more than our own, against the will of the right
owners; plainly violating that precept of Solomon:
Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, ^{Prov. iii. 27.}
when it is in the power of thy hand to do it. If we
are ambitious of having a property in somewhat, or
affect to call any thing our own, 'tis only by nobly
giving that we can accomplish our desire; that will
certainly appropriate our goods to our use and bene-
fit: but from basely keeping, or vainly embezzling

¹ Σὺ δὲ οὐδὲ ἀποστερήσῃς, ἀ τὸς οἰκονομίαν ἐδέξῃ, ταῦτα ἴδια σαυτῷ
ποιούμενος; Bas. M.

^m Nostrum est (pauperes clamant) quod effunditis; nobis cru-
deliter subtrahitur, quod inaniter expenditur. Bern. Ep. 42.

SERM. them, they become not our possession and enjoyment, but our theft and our baneⁿ. (These things, XXXI. spoken after the holy fathers, wise instructors in matters of piety, are to be understood with reasonable temperament, and practised with honest prudence. I cannot stand to discuss cases, and remove scruples; a pious charity will easily discern its due limits and measures, both declining perplexity, and not evading duty. The sum is, that justice towards God and man obligeth us not to suffer our poor brother to perish, or pine away for want, when we surfeit and swim in plenty, or not to see him lack necessaries, when we are well able to relieve him.)

3. Shewing bounty and mercy are the most proper and the principal expressions of our gratitude unto God; so that in omitting them, we are not only very unjust, but highly ingrateful. Innumerable are the benefits, favours, and mercies, (both common and private,) which God hath bestowed on us, and doth continually bestow: he incessantly showers down blessings on our heads; *he daily loadeth us with his benefits*; he perpetually *crowneth us with lovingkindness and tender mercies*: all that we are, all that we have, all that we can hope for of good, is alone from his free bounty: our beings and lives, with all the conveniences and comforts of them, we entirely owe to him as to our Maker, our Preserver, our constant Benefactor: all the excellent privileges we enjoy, and all the glorious hopes we have as Christians, we also stand indebted for purely to his undeserved mercy and grace.

Ps. cxvi. 12. And, *What shall we render unto the Lord for all*

ⁿ Omne quod male possidetur alienum est: male autem possidet, qui male utitur. *August. Ep. 54.*

his benefits toward us? Shall we render him nothing? Shall we refuse him any thing? Shall we boggle at making returns so inconsiderable, in regard to what he hath done for us? What is a little gold, or silver, or brass perhaps, which our poor neighbour craveth of us, in comparison to our life, our health, our reason; to all accommodations of our body, and all endowments of our mind? What are all the goods in the world to the love and favour of God, to the pardon of our sins, to the gifts of God's Spirit, to the dignity of being the children of God and heirs of salvation; to the being freed from extreme miseries, and made capable of eternal felicity? And doth not this unexpressible goodness, do not all these inestimable benefits require some correspondent thankfulness? Are we not obliged, shall we not be willing to exhibit some real testimony thereof? And what other can we exhibit beside this? We cannot directly or immediately requite God, for he cannot so receive any thing from us; he is not capable of being himself enriched or exalted, of being anywise pleased or bettered by us, who is in himself infinitely sufficient, glorious, joyful, and happy: *Our goodness extends not to him; a man cannot be profitable to his Maker.* All that we can do in this kind is thus indirectly, in the persons of his poor relations, to gratify him, imparting at his desire, and for his sake, somewhat of what he hath bestowed on us upon them. Such a thankful return we owe unto God, not only for what he hath given us, but even for the capacity of giving to others; for that we are in the number of those who can afford relief, and who need not to demand it. Our very wealth and prosperous state should not seem to us

Ps. xvi. 2.
Job xxii. 2.

SER.M. so contemptible things, that we should be unwilling to render somewhat back in grateful resentment for them: the very act of giving is itself no mean benefit; (having so much of honour in it, so much of pleasure going with it, so much of reward following it;) we receive far more than we return in giving; for which therefore it is fit that we should return our gratitude, and consequently that we should perform these duties^o. For indeed without this practice, no other expression of gratitude can be true in itself, or can be acceptable to God. We may seem abundantly to thank him in words; but a sparing hand gives the lie to the fullest mouth: we may spare our breath, if we keep back our substance; for all our praising God for his goodness, and blessing him with our lips, if we will do nothing for him, if we will not part with any thing for his sake, appears mere compliment; is, in truth, plain mockery, and vile hypocrisy.

4. Yea, which we may further consider, all our devotion, severed from a disposition of practising these duties, is no less such; cannot have any true worth in it, shall not yield any good effect from it. Our prayers, if we are uncharitably disposed, what are they other than demonstrations of egregious impiudence and folly? For how can we with any face

^o Δις τι Θεῷ χαριστήριον, ὅτι τῶν εὖ ποιεῖν δυναμένων ἐγένου, ἀλλ' οὐ τῶν εὖ παθεῖν δεομένων. Naz.

—τὸν φιλάνθρωπον ὑμῆσαι δεσπότην, ὅτι τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις ἡμᾶς σωφρανίζει παθήμασι, καὶ ὥχ ἡμᾶς εἰς ἔτερον παρέπεμψεν οἰκίας, ἀλλ' εἰς τὰς ἡμετέρας ἄλλους ἤγαγε θύρας. Theod. Ep. 30.

Εἰ δὲ μὴ νομίζεις λαμβάνειν μᾶλλον, η̄ διδόναι, μὴ παράσχει. Chrysost. tom. v. Orat. 54.

Nec enim homo Deo præstat beneficium in his quæ dederit,
sed Deus his homini quæ acceperit. Salvian.

presume to ask any thing from God, when we deny SERM.
him requesting a small matter from us? How can XXXI.
we with any reason expect any mercy from him,
when we vouchsafe not to shew any mercy for his
sake? Can we imagine that God will hearken unto,
or mind our petitions, when we are deaf to his en-
treaties, and regardless of his desires? No; *Whoso Prov. xxi.
stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also
shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.*^{13.} 'Tis his
declaration to such bold and unreasonable petition-
ers, *When you spread forth your hands, I will not Isa. i. 15.
hear you; when you make many prayers, I will
not hear.* No importunity, no frequency of prayers
will move God in such a case; the needy man's cries ^{James. v. 4.}
and complaints will drown their noise; his sighs and <sup>Eccl. iv.
4, 5, 6.</sup>
groans will obstruct their passage, and stop the ears
of God against them. Likewise all our semblances
of repentance, all our corporal abstinences and aust-
erities, if a kind and merciful disposition are want-
ing, what are they truly but presumptuous dallyings,
or impertinent triflings with God? For do we not
grossly collude with sin, when we restrain the sen-
sual appetites of the body, but foment the soul's
more unreasonable desires; when we curb our wan-
ton flesh, and give licence to a base spirit? Do we ^{τί οἱ σίδες,}
^{εὐθέατον}
^{μητρὶ ἀπα-}
^{θεσίας;}
not palpably baffle, when in respect to God we pre-
tend to deny ourselves, yet upon urgent occasion
allow him nothing? Do we not strangely prevari- <sup>&c. Chrys.
tom. v. Or.
55.</sup>
cate, when we would seem to appease God's anger,
and purchase his favour by our submissions, yet re-
fuse to do that which he declares most pleasing to
him, and most necessary to those purposes? It is an
ordinary thing for men thus to serve God, and thus
to delude themselves: *I have known many,* saith St.

SERM. Basil, who have fasted, and prayed, and groaned,
XXXI. and expressed all kind of costless piety, who yet

^{2 Sam.} would not part with one doit to the afflicted.
^{xxiv. 2}

Such a cheap and easy piety, which costs us little or nothing, can surely not be worth much; and we ^{1 Sam. iii. 3} must not conceit, that the all-wise God (*the God of knowledge, by whom actions are weighed*, as Anna ^{Prov. xvi. 2} sang, and who *weigheth the spirits* also, as the Wise Man saith) will be cheated therewith, or take it for more than its just value. No; he hath expressly signified, that he hath *not chosen* such services, nor doth take any pleasure in them: he hath called ^{Isa. lviii. 5} them *vain and impertinent oblations*; not *sweet* or ^{i. 13, 14.} *acceptable*, but *abominable* and *troublesome* to him, ^{Mic. vi. 6} such as he *cannot away with*, and *is weary to bear*. ^{7. Jer. vi. 20.}

'Tis *religious liberality* that doth prove us to be serious and earnest in other *religious performances*; which assures that we value matters of piety at a considerable rate; which gives a substance and solidity to our devotions; which sanctifies our fasts, and verifies our penances; which renders our praises real, and our prayers effectual; so that these being combined, we may reasonably expect acceptance and recompense; and in effect to hear that from God, ^{Acts x. 4.} which by him was returned to good Cornelius, *Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.*

5. The conscientiable practice of these duties doth plainly spring from those good dispositions of mind regarding God, which are the original grounds and fountains of all true piety; and the neglect of them

Ρ Οἶδα πολλοὺς μητεύοντας, προσευχομένους, στενάζοντας, πᾶσαν τὴν ἀδάπταν εὐλάβειαν ἐνδεικνυμένους, ὅβολὲν δὲ ἔνα μὴ προσεμένους τοῖς θλιβομένοις. Bas. M. in Luc. xii. 8.

issueth from those vicious dispositions which have a SERM.
peculiar inconsistency with piety, being destructive XXXI.
thereof in the very foundation and root. Faith in
God is the fundamental grace upon which piety is
grounded; love and fear of God are the radical prin-
ciples from which it grows: all which as the cha-
ritable man discovers in his practice, so they are ap-
parently banished from the heart of the illiberal and
unmerciful person.

As for faith, the good man, in shewing bounty,
exerciseth the chief act thereof; he freely parteth
with his goods, because he trusteth on God's provi-
dence more than them, and believeth God more
ready to help him, than any creature can do, in his
need; because he is persuaded that God is most
good and benign, so as never to suffer him to be
oppressed with want; because he taketh God to be
just and faithful, who, having charged him *to care* Matt. vi. 25.
for nothing, but *to cast his care and burden upon* Phil. iv. 6.
the Lord, having promised to *care for him*, to *sus-* 1 Pet. v. 7.
tain him, never to leave or forsake him, having Ps. lv. 22.
also engaged himself to repay and recompense him
for what he giveth to his poor neighbour, will not
fail to make good his word; because he thinks God
abundantly solvent, and himself never the poorer for
laying out in his behalf; because, in short, he is
content to live in a dependance upon God, and at
his disposal. It is mentioned by the apostle to the
Hebrews, as a special instance of a resolute and con-
stant faith in the first Christians, that *they took joy-* Heb. x. 34.
fully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in them-
selves that they had in heaven a better and an
enduring substance. He that not forcibly by the
violent rapacity of others, but voluntarily by his own

SERM. free resignation for the service of God, delivereth
XXXI. them up with the same alacrity, opinion, and hope, thereby demonstrates the same faith. But the *gripple wretch*, who will bestow nothing on his poor brother for God's sake, is evidently an infidel, having none at all, or very heathenish conceits of God. He must be either a mere atheist, disbelieving the existence of God; or an epicurean, in his heart denying God's providence over human affairs⁴; (for did he conceive God to have any regard unto, or any influence over what passes here, how could he be afraid of wanting upon this score? how could he repose any confidence in these possessions? how could he think himself secure in such a neglect or defiance of God?) or he must be exceedingly profane, entertaining most dishonourable and injurious apprehensions of God. He cannot but imagine God very unkind, not only in neglecting men that want his help, but in making them to suffer for spending upon his account; very unjust, in not repaying what he borrows; very unfaithful, in breaking his word; very deceitful, in gulling us of our things by fair promises of restitution and requital: or he must apprehend God forgetful of what we do, and himself says; or that he is needy and impotent, not having wherewith to make satisfaction, not being able to make good what he pretends. He must in his conceit debase God even beneath the vilest creatures, thinking a senseless lump of clay more apt in his need to help him, than God can be with all his power and care; supposing his money safer in his own coffers than in God's hands, and that iron bars

⁴ Ο γὰρ τοιῦτος οὐ τῷ Θεῷ πεπίστευκεν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ιαντοῦ χρυσῷ, θὲν τοῦτο ἥγουμενος, καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ πεποιθώς. Const. Apost. iv. 4.

will guard it more surely than divine protection; SERM.
esteeming his neighbour's bond for much better se-
curity than God's word, and that a mortal man is far
more able or more true than the eternal God. He
certainly cannot think one word true that God says,
being loath to trust him for a penny, for a piece of
bread, or for an old garment. All God's promises of
recompense, and threatenings of punishment, he takes
for idle fictions: heaven and hell are but Utopias in
his conceit; the joys of one, offered to the charitable
person, are but pleasant fancies; the torments of
the other, denounced to the uncharitable, but fearful
dreams. All other things are but names; money and
lands are the only real things unto him; all the hap-
piness he can conceive or wish is contained in bags
and barns; these are the sole points of his faith, and Hab. ii. 9.
objects of his confidence. *He makes gold his hope,* Job xxvi.
and saith to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence.^{24, 25.}
He rejoices because his wealth is great, and be-
cause his hand hath gotten much, as Job speaketh,
disclaiming that practice in himself, and tacitly
charging it on the persons we speak of. He doth,
in fine, affect a total independency upon God, and
cares to have no dealing with him; he would trust
to himself, and live on his own estate: so gross in-
fidelity and horrible profaneness of mind lie couched
under this sort of vices.

As for the love of God, the liberal man declares it,
in that for God's sake he is willing to part with any
thing, that he values God's love and favour above all
other goods; that he deems himself rich and happy
enough in the enjoyment of God. But, *Who hath*¹ John iii.
this world's goods, and seeth his brother have^{17.}
need, and shutteth up his bowels from him, how

[SERM.] *dwelleteth the love of God in him?* saith St. John:
XXXI. that is, it is impossible he should love God; 'tis a vain conceit to think he does; 'tis a frivolous thing for him to pretend it. For how possibly can he bear in his heart any affection to God, who will not for his sake, and at his instance, part with a little worthless trash and dirty pelf? who prizes so inconsiderable matters beyond God's favour and friendship? who prefers the keeping of his wealth before the enjoyment of God; and chooses rather certainly to quit his whole interest in God, than to adventure a small parcel of his estate with God? His practice indeed sufficiently discovers, that his hard and stupid heart is uncapable of any love, except of a corrupt, inordinate, and fond love, or dotage toward himself, since so present and sensible objects cannot affect him. *He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?*

¹ John iv.
^{20.}

Ps. cxix.
^{127.}

Exod. xviii. *sands of gold and silver:* he shews that he is *a man of truth, fearing God, and hating covetousness;* which dispositions, as having much affinity and connection, are well joined together by Jethro. But the uncharitable man can have little fear of

God before his eyes : since the commands of God SERM.
have no efficacy on his conscience ; since he dreads XXXI.
not the effects of divine power and justice, provoked
by his disobedience ; since he deems an imaginary
danger of want from giving, worse than a cer-
tain commission of sin in withholding ; and is more
afraid of penury here, than of damnation here-
after.

The truth is, the covetous or illiberal man is therefore uncapable of being truly pious, because his heart is possessed with vain devotion toward some-
what beside God, which in effect is his sole divinity ; he is justly styled an idolater, for that he directs and Col. iii. 5.
Eph. v. 5.
employs the chief affections of his mind upon an idol of clay, which he loves with all his heart and all his soul, which he entirely confides in, which he esteems and worships above all things. It is Mammon, which of all the competitors and antagonists of God, invading God's right, and usurping his place, is (as our Lord intimates) the most dangerous, and desperately repugnant : where he becomes predomi-
nant, true religion is quite excluded ; *Ye cannot* Matt. vi. 24.
serve God and mammon. Other vicious inclinations combat reason, and often baffle it, but seldom so vanquish it, as that a man doth approve or applaud himself in his miscarriages : but the covetous humour seizeth on our reason itself, and seateth itself therein ; inducing it to favour and countenance what is done amiss. The voluptuous man is swayed by the violence of his appetite ; but the covetous is seduced by the dictate of his judgment : he therefore scrapes and hoards, and lets go nothing, because he esteems wealth the best thing in the world, and then judges himself most wise, when he is most base. *Labour* Prov. xxiii. 4.

SERM. *not to be rich ; cease from thine own wisdom,* saith
XXXI. Solomon ; intimating the judgment such persons are
wont to make of their riches : whence, of all dispo-
sitions opposite to piety, this is the most pernicious.
But further,

6. Let us consider, that nothing is more conformable to God's nature, or renders us more like to him, than beneficence and mercy ; and that consequently nothing can be more grateful to him : that nothing is more disagreeable and contrary to the essential disposition of God, than illiberality and unmercifulness ; and therefore that nothing can be more distasteful to him. What is any being in the world, but an efflux of his bounty, and an argument of his liberality ? Look every where about nature, consider the whole tenor of providence, survey all the works, and scan all the actions of God, you will find them all conspiring in attestation to those sweet characters and elogies which the holy scripture

Exod. xxxiv. 6. ascribeth to God, representing him to be *merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness ; to be sorry for evil, (incident to, or inflicted upon any creature,) to delight in mercy, to wait that he may be gracious ; styling him the God of love, of peace, of hope, of patience, of all grace, and of all consolation, the Father of pities, rich in mercy, and full of bowels ; affirming of him, and by manifold evidences demonstrating, that he is benign even unto the ungrateful and evil ; that he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.* Nature, I say, providence, and revelation, do all concur in testifying this, that there is nothing in God so peculiarly admirable, nothing, as it were, so godlike, that is, so highly venerable and amiable,

Luke vi. 35.
Ps. cxlv. 9.

as to do good and shew mercy^r. We therefore by SERM. liberal communication to the needy do most approach to the nature of God, and most exactly imitate his practice; acquiring to ourselves thereby somewhat of divinity, and becoming little gods to our neighbour. *Nothing*, saith St. Chrysostom, maketh us so near equal to God as beneficence^s: and, *Be*, saith St. Gregory Nazianzen, *a god to the unfortunate, imitating the mercy of God; for a man hath nothing of God so much as to do good*^t. That such hath always been the common apprehension of men, the practice of all times sheweth, in that men have been ever apt to place their benefactors among their gods, deferring that love and veneration unto them in degree, which in perfection do appertain to the supreme Benefactor^u. *Be merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful*; so our Saviour proposeth God's mercy to us, both as a pattern directing, and as an argument inducing us to mercifulness: implying it also to be a good sign, declaring us the children of God, the genuine offspring of the all-good and all-merciful Father; yea, that it even renders and constitutes us such, (we thereby coming most truly to represent, and most nearly to

^r Θεοῦ πολλῶν ὄντων ἐφ' οἷς θαυμάζεται, οὐδὲν οὖτας ὡς τὸ πάντας εὐεργετεῖς θύματα. Naz. Orat. 26.

^s Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἡμᾶς ὄντων Θεῷ ποιεῖ, ὡς τὸ εὐεργετεῖν. Chrys. in Matt. Orat. 35.

^t Γένου τῷ ἀτυχοῦντι Θεός, τὸν ἔλεον τοῦ Θεοῦ μητράμενος· οὐδὲν γὰρ οὖτας ὡς τὸ εὖ ποιεῖν ἀνθρώπος ἔχει Θεοῦ. Naz. Or. 16.

^u Hic est vetustissimus referendi bene merentibus gratiam mos, ut tales numinibus adscribantur. Plin. ii. 7.

Suscepit vita hominum, consuetudoque communis, ut beneficiis excellentes viros in cœlum fama ac voluntate tollerent. Cic. de N. D. lib. ii.

Deus est
mortali, ja-
vare morta-
lem. Plin.
N. H. i. ii.

XXXI.

SERM. resemble him.) Our Lord further teaches us, saying,
XXXI. *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you,*
Matt. v. 44. *do good to those that hate you—that ye may be*
45. the sons of your Father which is in heaven. And they who thus are God's children must consequently be very dear to him, and most gracious in his sight; he cannot but greatly like and love himself (the best of himself) in them; he cannot but cherish and treat them well, who are the fairest and truest images of himself; no spectacle can be so pleasant to him, as to see us in our practice to act himself, doing good Col. iii. 12, to one another; *as the elect of God, holy and beloved, putting on bowels of mercies and kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another,*
^{13.} *Eph. v. 1, 2. even as Christ forgave us; being followers of God as dear children, and walking in love, even as Christ also loved us.* But on the other side, there is not in nature any thing so remotely distant from God, or so extremely opposite to him, as a greedy and griping niggard: hell is scarce so contrary to heaven, as such a man's disposition to the nature of God: for 'tis *goodness* which sits gloriously triumphant at the top of heaven; and *uncharitableness* lieth miserably grovelling under the bottom of hell: heaven descends from the one, as its principal cause; hell is built on the other, as its main foundation: as the one approximates the blessed angels to God, and beatifies them; so the other removeth the cursed fiends to such a distance from God and happiness: not to wish, not to do any good, is that which renders them both so bad and so wretched; and whoever in his conditions is so like to them, and in his practice so agrees with them, cannot but also

be very odious to God, and extremely unhappy. SERM.
God cannot but abhor so base a degeneration from XXXI.
his likeness in those who by nature are his children,
and should be further such according to his gracious
design ; neither can any thing more offend his eyes,
than seeing them to use one another unkindly. So
that if obtaining the certain favour of the great God,
with all the benefits attending it, seem considerable
to us ; or if we think it advisable to shun his dis-
pleasure, with its sad effects; it concerns us to prac-
tise these duties. So I conclude that sort of consi-
derations, enforcing these duties, which more imme-
diately regard God.

Further, before we deny our relief to our poor ^{III. Head of} _{discourse.} neighbour, let us with the eyes of our mind look on
him, and attentively consider who he is, what he is
in himself, and what he is in relation unto us. [*The
righteous considereth the cause of the poor; but
the wicked regardeth not to know it.* Prov. xxix. 7.
Blessed is he that considereth the poor. Psal. xli. 1.]

1. He whose need craves our bounty, whose mi-
sery demands our mercy, what is he? He is not
truly so mean and sorry a thing, as the disguise of
misfortune, under which he appears, doth represent
him. He who looks so deformedly and dismally,
who to outward sight is so ill bestead, and so pitifully
accoutréed, hath latent in him much of admir-
able beauty and glory. He within himself containeth
a nature very excellent; an immortal soul, and an
intelligent mind, by which he nearly resembleth
God himself, and is comparable to angels: he in-
visibly is owner of endowments, rendering him ca-
pable of the greatest and best things. What are
money and lands? What are silk and fine linen?

SERM. What are horses and hounds, in comparison to reason, to wisdom, to virtue, to religion, which he hath, or (in despite of all misfortune) he may have if he please? He whom you behold so dejectedly sneaking, in so despicable a garb, so destitute of all convenience and comfort, (lying in the dust, naked, or clad with rags, meagre with hunger or pain,) he comes of a most high and heavenly extraction: he was born a prince, the son of the greatest King eternal; he can truly call the sovereign Lord of all the world his father, having derived his soul from the mouth, having had his body formed by the hands Prov. xxii. 2. of God himself. (In this, *The rich and poor*, as the Wise Man saith, *do meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.*) That same forlorn wretch, whom we are so apt to despise and trample upon, Gen. i. 28. was framed and constituted lord of the visible world; had all the goodly brightnesses of heaven, and all the costly furnitures of earth created to serve him. Ps. viii. 6. (*Thou madest him*, saith the Psalmist of man, *to have dominion over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*) Yea, he was made an inhabitant of paradise, and possessor of felicities superlative; had immortal life and endless joy in his hand, did enjoy the entire favour and friendship of the Most High. Such in worth of nature and nobleness of birth he is, as a man; and highly more considerable he is, as a Christian. For, as vile and contemptible as he looks, God hath so regarded and prized him, as for his sake to descend from heaven, to clothe himself with flesh, to assume the form of a servant; for his good to undertake and undergo the greatest inconveniences, infirmities, wants, and disgraces, the most grievous troubles and

most sharp pains incident to mortal nature. God **SERM.**
hath adopted him to be his child; the Son of God **XXXI.**
hath deigned to call him brother: he is a member of
Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost, a free denizen of
the heavenly city, an heir of salvation, and candidate
of eternal glory. The greatest and richest personage
is not capable of better privileges than God hath
granted him, or of higher preferments than God hath
designed him to. He equally with the mightiest
prince is the object of God's especial providence and
grace, of his continual regard and care, of his fa-
therly love and affection; who, as good Elihu saith,
accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth ^{Job xxxiv.}
the rich more than the poor; for they are all the ^{19.}
work of his hands. In fine, this poor creature
whom thou seest is a man, and a Christian, thine
equal, whoever thou art, in nature, and thy peer in
condition: I say not, in the uncertain and unstable
gifts of fortune, not in this worldly state, which is
very inconsiderable; but in gifts vastly more pre-
cious, in title to an estate infinitely more rich and
excellent*. Yea, if thou art vain and proud, be so-
ber and humble; he is thy better, in true dignity
much to be preferred before thee, far in real wealth
surpassing thee: for, *Better is the poor that walk-* ^{Ecclus. x.}
eth in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in ^{24.} ^{Prov. xxviii.}
his ways, though he be rich. ^{6.}

2. That distinction which thou standest upon,
and which seemeth so vast between thy poor neigh-

* — ἐνήργον, ὅτι δύσις σοι ἐλεύθερός ἔστι, καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς σοι κοινωνίη
εὑρεῖται, καὶ πάντα σοι κοινὰ κέκτηται. Chrys. in Heb. Orat. 2.

Οἱ τοῖνυν ἐν τοῖς πνευματικοῖς τοσαύτην ἔχοντες λεστικάν, πόθεν μέγα
φρενεῖτε; ὅτι ὁ δεῖνα πλούσιος, καὶ ὁ δεῖνα ισχυρός; Chrys. in Eph. iv. 4.
in Joh. Orat. 15.

* Η τοῦ πνεύματος χάρις ὁμοτίμους ποιεῖ τοὺς διαφόρους. Naz. Or. 23.

SERM. XXXI. *bour and thee, what is it? whence did it come?*
 whither tends it? It is not anywise natural, or according to primitive design: for as all men are in faculties and endowments of nature equal, so were they all originally equal in condition, all wealthy and happy, all constituted in a most prosperous and plentiful estate; all things at first were promiscuously exposed to the use and enjoyment of all, every one from the common stock assuming as his own what he needed. Inequality and private interest in things (together with sicknesses and pains, together with all other infelicities and inconveniences) were the by-blows of our fall^y: sin introduced these degrees and distances; it devised the names of rich and poor; it begot these ingrossings and inclosures of things; it forged those two small pestilent words, *meum* and *tuum*, which have engendered so much strife among men, and created so much mischief in the world: these preternatural distinctions were, I say, brooded by our fault, and are in great part fostered and maintained thereby; for were we generally so good, so just, so charitable as we should be, they could hardly subsist, especially in that measure they do^z.

Υ Πενία καὶ πλούτος, ἐλευθερία τε, ἦν φαμὲν, καὶ δουλεία, καὶ τὰ τοι-
 αῦτα τῶν ὀνομάτων, ὑστερὸν ἐπεισῆλθον τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὥσπερ ἀρ-
 ρωτήματα τῇ κακίᾳ συνεισπέσοντα, κἀκείνης ὅντα ἐπινόματα. Greg.
 Naz. Orat. 6.

^z Τὸ γὰρ ἔδιν, καὶ τὸ σὸν, τοῦτο τὸ φυχὴν βῆμα, καὶ μαρίον πολέμους εἰς
 ἡγησικόν εἰσαγαγὼν, &c. Chrys. tom. v. λογ. νδ. et in Act. ii. 47.

Natura omnia omnibus in commune profudit; sic enim Deus generari jussit omnia, ut pastus omnibus communis esset, et terra foret omnium quædam communis possessio. Natura igitur jus commune generavit, usurpatio jus fecit privatum. Amb. Offic. i. 28.

Καὶ γὰρ εἰ μετὰ ἀκριβείας τοῦτο ἐφιλάττετο, οὐ δῦλος, οὐκ ἐλεύθερος ἦν,
 οὐκ ἄρχων, οὐκ ἄρχόμενος, οὐ πλούσιος, οὐ πέινης, οὐ μικρὸς, οὐ μέγας, οὐ
 διάβολος ἀν ἐγνώσθη ποτέ. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Orat. 32.

God indeed (for promoting some good ends, and for prevention of some mischiefs, apt to spring from our ill-nature in this our lapsed state; particularly to prevent the strife and disorder which scrambling would cause among men, presuming on equal right and parity of force) doth suffer them in some manner to continue, and enjoins us a contented submission to them: but we mistake, if we think that natural equality and community are in effect quite taken away; or that all the world is so cantonized among some few, that the rest have no share therein. No; every man hath still a competent patrimony due to him, and a sufficient provision made for his tolerable subsistence. God hath brought no man hither to be necessarily starved, or pinched with extreme want; but hath assigned to every one a child's portion, in some fair way to be obtained by him, either by legal right, or by humble request, which according to conscience ought to have effect^a. No man therefore is allowed to detain, or to destroy superfluously what another man apparently wants; but is obliged to impart it to him; so that rich men are indeed but the treasurers, the stewards, the caterers of God for the rest of men, having a strict charge to dispense unto every one his meat in due season, and no just privilege to withhold it from any: the honour of distribution is conferred on them, as a reward of their fidelity and care; the right of

"Ποτέρ δὲ εἴ τις ἐν θεάτρῳ θεᾶν καταλαβὼν, εἴτα εἰσεργούς τοὺς ἐπεισιόντας ἴδιον ἔαντοῦ κρίνων τὸ κοινὸν πᾶσι κατὰ τὴν χρῆσιν προκείμενον τοιοῦτοι εἰσι· καὶ οἱ πλούσιοι· τὰ καὶ κοινὰ προκατάσχοντες ἴδιοιούνται διὰ τὴν φύσιν. Basil. M.

^a Incassum se innocentes putant, qui commune Dei munus sibi privatum vindicant. Greg. M.

Matt. xxiv.

^{45.} Luke xiii.

^{43.}

SERM. enjoyment is reserved to the poor, as a provision for
XXXI. their necessity. Thus hath God wisely projected,
 that all his children should both effectually and
 quietly be provided for, and that none of them
 should be oppressed with penury ; so that, as St.
^{2 Cor. viii.}
^{14.} Paul hath it, *one man's abundance shall supply another man's want, that there may be an equality* :
 for since no man can enjoy more than he needs, and
 every man should have so much as he needs, there
 can be really no great inequality among men ; the
 distinction will scarce remain otherwhere than in
 Ego mea sic fancy. What the philosopher said of himself, *What
 habeo, ut omnium I have is so mine, that it is every man's*, is accord-
^{Deme-}ing to the practice of each man, who is truly and in
^{Sen.de Ben.} due measure charitable ; whereby that seemingly
^{vii. 10.} enormous^b discrimination among men is well mo-
 derated, and the equity of divine Providence is vin-
 dicated. But he that ravenously grasps for more
 than he can well use, and gripes it fast into his
 clutches, so that the needy in their distress cannot
 come by it, doth pervert that equity which God hath
 established in things, defeats his good intention, (so
 far as he can,) and brings a scandal on his provi-
 dence : and so doing is highly both injurious and
 impious.

3. It was also (which we should consider) even one main end of this difference among us, permitted and ordered by God's providence, that as some men's industry and patience might be exercised by their poverty, so other men by their wealth should have ability of practising justice and charity; that so both rich and poor might thence become capable of re-

^b Ο δύσκολη τὸν πλησίον ὡς ἔαυτὸν, οὐδὲν περισσότερον κέκτηται τοῦ πλησίου. Basil. M.

compenses, suitable to the worth of such virtuous SERM. performances. *Why art thou rich*, saith St. Basil, XXXI.
and he poor? Surely for this; that thou mayest attain the reward of benignity, and faithful dispensation; and that he may be honoured with the great prize of patience^c. God in making thee rich, would have thee to be a double benefactor, not only to thy poor neighbour, but also to thyself, whilst thou bestowest relief on him, purchasing a reward to thyself. God also by this order of things designs, that a charitable intercourse should be maintained among men, mutually pleasant and beneficial; the rich kindly obliging the poor, and the poor gratefully serving the rich. Wherefore by neglecting these duties we unadvisedly cross the good purpose of God toward us, depriving ourselves of the chief advantages our wealth may afford.

4. We should also do well to consider, that a poor man, even as such, is not to be disregarded, and that poverty itself is no such contemptible thing as we may be prone to imagine. There are considerations, which may qualify poverty even to dispute the place with wealth, and to claim precedence to it. If the world vulgarly doth account and call the rich man happy, a better Author hath pronounced the poor man such: *Blessed are the poor*, doth march in the Luke vi. 20. van of the beatitudes; and a reason goeth along therewith, which asserteth its right to the place, *for*

^c Διά τι σὸν μὲν πλούτεις, ἐκεῖνος δὲ πένεται; ἡ πάντως ἡδα σὸν χρηστότητος καὶ πιστῆς οἰκονομίας μισθὸν ὑποδέξῃ, κἀκεῖνος τοῖς μεγάλοις ἄθλοις τῆς ἴπομονῆς τιμηθῇ. Basil. M.

Πλοῦτον καὶ πενήν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις διένειμεν ὁ τῶν ὅλων δημιουργός τε καὶ πρύτανις οὐκ ἀδίκῳ ψήφῳ χρησάμενος, ἀλλ' ἀφορμὴν ὀφελείας τοῖς πλουσίοις παρέχων τῶν πενήτων τὴν ἔνδειαν. Theod. Epist. 23.

SERM. *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*; for that they are
XXXI. not only in an equal capacity as men, but in a nearer
 disposition as poor, to the acquisition of that blissful
 state; for that poverty (the mistress of sobriety and
 honest industry, the mother of humility and pa-
 tience, the nurse of all virtue) renders men more
 willing to go, and more expedite in the way toward
 heaven: by it also we conform to the Son of God
 himself, the heir of eternal majesty, the Saviour of

^{2 Cor. viii.} the world, *who for our sake became poor*, (*δι' ἡμᾶς*
^{9.} *ἐπτρώχευτε*, for our sake became a beggar,) *that we*

through his poverty (or beggary) *might become rich*:
 he willingly chose, he especially dignified and sancti-
 fied that depth of poverty, which we so proudly slight
 and loathe. The greatest princes and potentates in
 the world, the most wealthy and haughty of us all,
 but for one poor beggar had been irrecoverably mi-

Dedignatur serable; to poverty it is, that every one of us doth
 aliquis pau- owe all the possibility there is, all the hopes we can
 pertatem, cujus tam have of our salvation; and shall we then ingratefully
 clarae ima- gines sunt? requite it with scorn, or with pitiless neglect? Shall

Sen. Consol.
^{ad Helv. 12.} we presume, in the person of any poor man, to abhor
 or contemn the very poor, but most holy and most
 happy JESUS, our Lord and Redeemer? No; if we
 will do poverty right, we must rather for his dear
 sake and memory defer an especial respect and ve-
 neration thereto.

5. Thus a due reflection on the poor man himself,
 his nature and state, will induce us to succour. But
 let us also consider him as related unto ourselves:
 every such person is our near kinsman, is our bro-
 ther, is by indissoluble bands of cognition in blood,
 and agreement in nature, knit and united to us.
 We are all but several streams issuing from one

source, several twigs sprouting from one stock ; *one SERM. blood*, derived through several channels ; *one substance*, by miraculous efficacy of the divine bene-<sup>Acts xvii.
26.</sup> diction multiplied or dilated unto several times and places. We are all fashioned according to the same original idea, resembling God, our common Father ; we are all endowed with the same faculties, inclinations, and affections ; we all conspire in the same essential ingredients of our constitution, and in the more notable adjuncts thereof ; it is only some inconsiderable accidents (such as age, place, figure, stature, colour, garb) which diversify and distinguish us ; in which, according to successions of time and chance, we commonly no less differ from ourselves, than we do at present from them : so that in effect and reasonable esteem, every man is not only our brother, but (as Aristotle saith of a friend) *ἄλλος αὐτὸς, another one's self* ; is not only our most lively image, but in a manner our very substance ; another ourselves under a small variation of present circumstances : the most of distinction between us and our poor neighbour consists in exterior show, in moveable attire, in casual appendages to the nature of man ; so that really when we use him well, we are kind to ourselves ; when we yield him courteous regard, we bear respect to our own nature ; when we feed and comfort him, we do sustain and cherish a member of our own body^d. But when we are cruel

^d *Nemo est in genere humano, cui non dilectio, etsi non pro mutua charitate, pro ipsa tamen communis naturæ societate debetur. Aug. Ep. 121.*

Οἰκεῖον τὰς ἀνθράκως ἀνθράκῳ καὶ φίλον. Arist.

'Εν ἀλλοτρίοις πάθεσι θεραπευτέων τὸ συγγενὲς, καὶ ὄμοδουλον. Greg. Naz.

Nihil est unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmetipsos sumus. Cic. de Leg. 1.

SERM. or harsh to him, we abuse ourselves ; when we scorn
XXXI. him, we lay disparagement and disgrace on man-
 kind itself ; when we withhold succour or suste-
 nance from him, we do, as the prophet speaketh,
 Isa. lviii. 7. *hide ourselves from our own flesh* ; we starve a
 part of our own body, and wither a branch of our
 stock ; immoderate selfishness so blindeth us, that
 we oversee and forget ourselves : it is in this, as it
 is in other good senses, true what the Wise Man
 Prov. xi. 17. saith, *The merciful man doeth good to his own
 soul ; but he that is cruel troubleth his own
 flesh.*

6. Further, as the poor man is so nearly allied
 to us by society of common nature, so is he more
 strictly joined to us by the bands of spiritual con-
 sanguinity. All Christians (high and low, rich and
 poor) are children of the same heavenly Father,
 spring from the same incorruptible seed, are rege-
 nerated to the same lively hope, are coheirs of the

Rom. xii. 5. same heavenly inheritance ; are all members of one
 Are all one. body, (*members*, saith St. Paul, *one of another*,) and
 Gal. iii. 28. animated by one holy Spirit : which relation, as it
 Πάντες γὰρ ὁμοῦ εἰς ἕντες
 is Christῷ Ἰησοῦ. is the most noble and most close that can be, so it
 Chrys. in Joh. Or. 15. should breed the greatest endearments, and should
 φίλων γὰρ εἴδει τὸν εἶται φίλον
 express itself in correspondent effects ; it should
 render us full of affection and sympathy one toward
 ἀδέσποτος πατρός, αλλὰ καὶ τὴν χει-
 another ; it should make us to tender the needs, and
 ματα. Eu- feel the sufferings of any Christian as our own ; it
 rip. An- should dispose us freely to communicate whatever
 drom. we have, how precious soever, to any of our bre-
 thren ; this holy friendship should establish a cha-
 ritable equality and community among us, both in
 point of honour and of estate : for since all things
 considerable are common unto us, since we are all

purchased and purified by the same precious blood, SERM. since we all partake of the same precious faith, of XXXI. the same high calling, of the same honourable privileges, of the same glorious promises and hopes; since we all have the same Lord and Saviour; why should these secular trifles be so private and particular among us? Why should not so huge a parity in those only valuable things not wholly (I say, not in worldly state or outward appearance, such as the preservation of order in secular affairs requireth, but) in our opinion and affection extinguish that slight distinction of *rich* and *poor*, in concernments tem- Col. iii. 11. poral? How can we slight so noble, so great a personage as a Christian, for wanting a little dross? How can we deem ourselves much his superior, upon so petty an advantage, for having that, which is not worth speaking or thinking of, in comparison to what he enjoyeth? Our Lord himself is not ashamed to call the least among us his brother and his friend: and shall we then disdain to yield to such Heb. ii. 11. Matt. xxv. 40. John xv. 14. an one the regard and treatment suitable to such a quality? Shall we not honour any brother of our Lord? Shall we not be civil and kind to any friend of his? If we do not, how can we pretend to bear any true respect or affection unto himself? It is his express precept, that the greatest among us should, Matt. xx. 26. in imitation of his most humble and charitable self, be ready to serve the meanest; and that we should in honour prefer one another, and in lowliness of Rom. xii. 10. mind esteem others better than ourselves, are apo- Phil. ii. 3. stolical rules, extending indifferently to rich and poor, which are plainly violated by disregarding the poor. Yea, this relation should, according to St. John's doctrine, dispose us not only freely to im-

SER.M. part these temporal goods, but even, if occasion be,
XXXI. willingly to expose our very lives for our brethren:

^{1 John iii.} 16. *Hereby, saith he, we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren.* How greatly then are they deficient from their duty, how little in truth are they Christians, who are unwilling to part with the very superfluities and excrements of their fortune for the relief of a poor Christian! Thus considering our brother, may breed in us charitable dispositions toward him, and induce us to the practice of these duties.

<sup>IV. Head
of dis-
course.</sup>

Moreover, if we reflect upon ourselves, and consider either our nature, or our state here, we cannot but observe many strong engagements to the same practice.

1. The very constitution, frame, and temper of our nature directeth and inclineth us thereto; whence, by observing those duties, we observe our own nature, we improve it, we advance it to the best perfection it is capable of; by neglecting them, we thwart, we impair, we debase the same — *hæc*

^{Juven. Sat.} xv. 133. *nostri pars optima sensus;* the best of our natural inclinations (those sacred relics of God's image originally stamped on our minds) do sensibly prompt,

<sup>—mutuus
ut nos af-
fектus pete-
re auxill-
um, et pre-
stare jube-
ret. Juven.</sup> xv. 149. *Φιλόπτερον
και συμπαθεῖς* sense of pain inform us thereof, and instigate us to provide for its relief, do also grievously resent the distresses of another, admonishing us thereby, and

<sup>φίλος. Arch.
ad Mon.</sup> 852. provoking us to yield him succour. Such is the natural sympathy between men, (discernible in all, but appearing most vigorous in the best natures,) that we cannot see, cannot hear of, yea, can hardly

imagine the calamities of other men, without being somewhat disturbed and afflicted ourselves. As also nature, to the acts requisite toward preservation of our life, hath annexed a sensible pleasure, forcibly enticing us to the performance of them: so hath she made the communication of benefits to others to be accompanied with a very delicious relish upon the mind of him that practises it; nothing indeed carrying with it a more pure and savoury delight than beneficence. A man may be virtuously voluptuous, and a laudable epicure by doing much good; for to receive good, even in the judgment of Epicurus himself, (the great patron of pleasure,) is no wise so pleasant as to do it^e: God and nature therefore within us do solicit the poor man's case: even our own ease and satisfaction demand from us compassion and kindness towards him; by exercising them, we hearken to nature's wise disciplines, and comply with her kindly instincts: we cherish good humour, and sweeten our complexion; so ennobling our minds, we become not only more like to God, but more perfectly men: by the contrary practice we rebel against the laws, and pervert the due course of our nature; we do weaken, corrupt, and stifle that which is best in us; we harden and stu-pify our souls; so monstrously degenerating from the perfection of our kind, and becoming rather like savage beasts than sociable men; yea, somewhat worse perhaps than many beasts; for commonly brutes will combine to the succour of one another, they will defend and help those of the same kind.

2. And if the sensitive part within us doth sug-

^e Ἐπίκουρος τοῦ εὖ πάσχειν τὸ εὖ ποιεῖν οὐ μόνον κάλλιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡδὺ εἶναι φησι. Plut. de l'philos. conv. cum Princ.

SERM. gest so much, the rational dictates more unto us :
XXXI. that heavenly faculty, having capacities so wide, and so mighty energies, was surely not created to serve mean or narrow designs ; it was not given us to scrape eternally in earth, or to amass heaps of clay for private enjoyment ; for the service of one punie creature, for the sustenance or satisfaction of a single carcass : it is much below an intelligent person to weary himself with servile toils, and distract his mind with ignoble cares, for concernments so low and scanty : but to regard and pursue the common good of men ; to dispense, advise, and aid, where need requires ; to diffuse its virtue all about in beneficial effects ; these are operations worthy of reason, these are employments congruous to the native excellency of that divine power implanted in us ; such performances declare indeed what a man is, whence he sprang, and whither he tends.

3. Further, examining ourselves, we may also observe, that we are in reality, what our poor neighbour appears to be, in many respects no less indigent and impotent than he : we no less, yea far more, for our subsistence depend upon the arbitrary power of another, than he seemeth to rely upon ours. We as defectible creatures do continually want support ; we as grievous sinners do always need mercy ; every moment we are contracting huge debts, far beyond our ability to discharge ; debts of gratitude for benefits received, debts of guilt for offences committed ; we therefore perpetually stand obliged to be craving for mercy and relief at the gates of heaven. We all, from prince to peasant, live merely upon alms, and are most really in condition beggars : *to pray always*, is a duty incumbent on us from the con-

dition of our nature, as well as by the command of SERM. God. Such a likeness in state should therefore dispose us to succour our fellows, and, δανείζειν Θεῷ ἔλεον ἐλέον χρήσοντας, to lend mercy to God, who need mercy from him, as the good father speaketh. We should, as the apostle advises and argues, remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being ourselves also in the body; as being companions in necessity, or subject to the like distress. If we daily receive mercy and relief, yet, unmindful of our obligation to God, refuse them to others, shall we not deserve to hear that dreadful exprobation, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

4. The great uncertainty and instability of our condition doth also require our consideration. We, οὐκτομίνους that now flourish in a fair and full estate, may soon ταρβύν τὸν be in the case of that poor creature, who now sues ἐν τράχην for our relief; we, that this day enjoy the wealth of Job, may the morrow need his patience: there are Sabeans, which may come, and drive away our cattle; there are tempests which may arise, and smite down our houses; there is a fire of God, which may fall from heaven, and consume our substance; a messenger of all these mischiefs may, for all we know, be presently at our doors; it happened so to a better man than we, as unexpectedly, and with as small ground to fear it, as it can arrive to us: all our wealth is surrounded with dangers, and exposed to casualties innumerable: violence may snatch it from us, treachery may cheat us of it; mischance may

SERM. seize thereon, a secret moth may devour it; the wisdom of Providence for our trial, or its justice for our punishment, may bereave us thereof; its own light and fluid nature (if no other accountable causes were apparent) might easily serve to waft it from us; for

XXXI. Prov. xxiii. *Riches*, saith the Wise Man, *make themselves wings;*
5. (they, it seems, do need no help for that,) *and fly away like as an eagle toward heaven*; that is, of their own accord they do swiftly convey themselves away, out of our sight, and beyond our reach; they are but

Eccles. v. 16. wind: *What profit*, says the Preacher, *hath he that laboureth for the wind?* For wind; that is, for a thing which can nowise be fixed or settled in one corner; which, therefore, it is a vanity to conceive that we can surely appropriate, or long retain. How then can we think to stand firm upon a place so slippery? how can we build any confidence on a bottom so loose and brittle? how can we suffer our minds to be swelled up like bubbles with vain conceit, by the breath of such things, more fleeting and vertiginous than any air? against the precepts of the wisest and

Ps. lxiii. 10. best men: *If riches increase*, saith the Psalmist,

Prov. xxiii. 5. *set not your heart on them: Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?* saith the Wise Man: (that is, wilt thou regard that which is so transitory and evanid, that it hardly may be deemed real; which we can scarce look on, before it is gone?) And, *Charge them*, saith St. Paul, *that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches:* (*ἐπὶ πλούτου ἀδηλοτητι*, in the obscurity, or inevidence of riches; things, which we can never plainly discern how long we shall keep them, how much we can enjoy them:) what should make us unwilling, with certain advantages to our-

selves, freely to let that go, which presently without SERM.
our leave may forsake us? How can we reasonably XXXI.
judge our case much different from that of the poorest
body, whenas in a trice we may perhaps change
places and persons; when, the scene turning, he may
be advanced unto our wealth, we may be depressed
into his want^f? Since every age yieldeth instances of
some Croesus, some Polycrates, some Pompey, some
Job, some Nebuchodonosor, who within a small com-
pass of time doth appear to all men the object both
of admiration and pity, is to the less wise the mark
both of envy and scorn^g; seeing every day presenteth
unexpected vicissitudes, the sea of human affairs con-
tinually ebbing and flowing, now rolling on this, now
on the other shore, its restless waves of profit and
credit; since especially there is a God, who arbitra-
rily disposeth things, and with a turn of his hand
changeth the state of men; who, as the scripture
saith, *maketh rich and poor, bringeth low and lifteth up; poureth contempt upon princes; raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory*: seeing, I
say,^f apparently such is the condition of things here,
that we may soon need his pity and help, who now
requesteth ours, why should we not be very ready
to afford them to him? Why should we not gladly
embrace our opportunity, and use our turn well;
becoming beforehand with others, and preventing

^f Καὶ γὰρ ἐσχάτης ἀνοίας ἀν εἴη δν καὶ ἀκούτες ἐξιστασθαι μέλλομεν
ιτέροις, τούτων μὴ μεταδοῦναι ἔκόντας τοῖς δεομένοις. Chrys. tom. v.
Orat. 55.

^g Sejanus—quo die illum Senatus deduxerat, populus in frusta
divisit. *Sen. de Tranq. ii.*

SERM. their reciprocal contempt or neglect of us hereafter :
XXXI. *Cast thy bread upon the waters ; for thou shalt*
Eccles. xi. *find it after many days. Give a portion to seven,*
1, 2. *and also unto eight ; for thou knowest not what*
evil shall be upon the earth : that is, considering the
inconstancy and uncertainty of affairs here, and what
adversity may befall thee, be liberal upon all occasions,
and thou shalt (even a good while after) find returns
of thy liberality upon thee : so the Wise Man ad-
vises, and so wisdom certainly dictates that we
should do.

5. And equity doth exact no less : for were any
of us in the needy man's plight, (as easily we may be
reduced thereto,) we should believe our case deserved
commiseration ; we should importunately demand
relief ; we should be grievously displeased at a re-
pulse ; we should apprehend ourselves very hardly
dealt with, and sadly we should complain of inhu-
manity and cruelty, if succour were refused to us.

Beneficium
qui dare
nescit, in-
juste petit.
Laber.
Mis.

Matt. vii.
12.

In all equity therefore we should be apt to minister
the same to others ; for nothing can be more unre-
asonable or unjust, than to require or expect that
from another, which in a like case we are unwilling
to render unto him : it is a plain deviation from that
fundamental rule, which is the base of all justice, and
virtually the sum, as our Saviour telleth us, of what-
ever is prescribed us : *All things whatsoever ye*
would that men should do to you, do ye even so to
them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. I add,
that upon these considerations, by unmerciful deal-
ing, we put ourselves into a very bad and ticklish
condition, wholly depending upon the constancy of
that which is most inconstant ; so that if our for-
tune do fail, we can neither reasonably hope for, nor

justly pretend to, any relief or comfort from others : SERM.
He that doeth good turns is mindful of that which ^{XXXI.}
may come hereafter ; and when he falleth, he shall ^{Eccles. vi.}
find a stay. ^{31.}

6. We should also remember concerning ourselves, that we are mortal and frail. Were we immortal, or could we probably retain our possessions for ever in our hands ; yea, could we foresee some definite space of time, considerably long, in which we might assuredly enjoy our stores, it might seem somewhat excusable to scrape hard, and to hold fast ; to do so might look like rational providence : but since *riches* ^{Prov. xxvii.} *are not for ever, nor doth the crown endure to all*²⁴ *generations,* as the Wise Man speaketh ; since they must infallibly be soon left, and there is no certainty of keeping them for any time, it is very unaccountable why we should so greedily seek them, and hug them so fondly. *The rich man*, saith St. James, *as* ^{James i. 10.} *the flower of the grass, shall pass away* ; it is his special doom *to fade away* suddenly ; it is obvious why in many respects he is somewhat more than others obnoxious to the fatal stroke, and upon special accounts of justice he may be further more exposed thereto : considering the case of the rich fool in the Gospel, we may easily discern them ; we ^{Luke xii.} should reckon, that it may happen to us as it did^{20.} there to him ; that after we have reared great barns, and *stored up much goods for many years*, our soul *this very night* may be *required of us* : however, if it be uncertain when, it is most certain, that after a very short time our thread will be spun out ; then shall we be rifled, and quite stript of all ; becoming ^{1 Tim. vi. 7.} *Eccles. v.* stark-naked, as when we came into the world : we ^{15.} shall not carry with us one grain of our glistering ^{Job i. 21.}

SERM. metals, or one rag of our gaudy stuff; our stately
XXXI. houses, our fine gardens, and our spacious walks, must
 all be exchanged for a close hole under ground; we
 Isa. xiv. 11. must for ever bid farewell to our pomps and magni-
 ficences, to our feasts and jollities, to our sports and
 pastimes; not one of all our numerous and splendid
 retinue, no companion of our pleasure, no admirer of
 our fortune, no flatterer of our vices, can wait upon
 us; desolate and unattended we must go down to
 the chambers of darkness: then shall we find that
 to die rich, as men are wont improperly to speak, is
 really to die most poor; that to have carefully kept
 our money, is to have lost it utterly; that by leaving
 much, we do indeed leave worse than nothing: to
 have been wealthy, if we have been illiberal and un-
 merciful, will be no advantage or satisfaction to us
 after we are gone hence; yea, it will be the cause of
 huge damage and bitter regret unto us. All our
 treasures will not procure us any favour, or purchase
 one advocate for us in that impartial world; yea, it
 shall be they which will there prosecute us with
 clamorous accusations, will bear sore testimony

James v. 3. against us, (*The rust of them*, saith St. James, *shall*
Luke xvi.

25. vi. 24. *be a witness against us*, signifying our unjust or
xii. 21.

Matt. xxv. uncharitable detention of them,) will obtain a most

30. James v. 5. heavy sentence upon us; they will render our audit
 more difficult, and inflame our reckoning; they will
 aggravate the guilt of our sins with imputations of
 unfaithfulness and ingratitude; so with their load

1 Tim. vi. 9. they will press us deeper into perdition: to omit,
 that having so ill managed them, we shall leave them
 behind us as marks of obloquy, and monuments of
 infamy upon our memories; for ordinarily of such a

Job xxvii. rich person it is true, that Job says of him, *Men*
19, 23.

hall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him SERM.
ut of his place; like one who departs from off this XXXI.
stage, after having very ill acted his part. Is it not
herefore infinitely better to prevent this being ne-
cessarily and unprofitably deprived of our goods, by
seasonably disposing them so as may conduce to our
enefit, and our comfort, and our honour^b; being
ery indifferent and unconcerned in our affection to-
ward them; modest and humble in our conceits
about them; moderate and sober in our enjoyments
of them; contented upon any reasonable occasion to
ose or leave them; and especially most ready to
ispense them in that best way, which God hath
prescribed, according to the exigencies of humanity
nd charity? By thus ordering our riches, we shall Luke xvi. 9.
render them benefits and blessings to us; we shall
y them procure sure friendship and favour, great
worship and respect in the other world; having so
ived, (in the exercise of bounty and mercy,) we
shall truly die rich, and in effect carry all our goods
along with us, or rather we have thereby sent them
before us; having, like wise merchants, transmitted
and drawn them by a most safe conveyance into our
country and home; where infallibly we shall find
them, and with everlasting content enjoy them. So
considering ourselves, and our state, will dispose us
to the practice of these duties.

Furthermore, if we contemplate our wealth itself, v. Head of
we may therein descry great motives to bounty. discourse.

1. Thus to employ our riches is really the best

^b Τῆς γὰρ ἐσχάτης ἀνοίας ἔστιν ἀφεῖναι τι τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀναπομεῖναι ἐν-
ταῦθα, ἡμῶν μικρὸν ὅστερον μελλόντων ἐντεῦθεν ἀποδημεῖν· καὶ γὰρ ὅπερ
ἴπολειφθῆ ζημία γίνεται· πάντα τούν εἰκῇ προπεμπόσθω, ἔνθα καὶ ἡμεῖς
ιατρίβειν μέλλομεν λοιπόν. Chrys. tom. v. Orat. 54.

SERM. use they are capable of; not only the most innocent,
XXXI. most worthy, most plausible, but the most safe, most
 pleasant, most advantageous, and consequently in all
 respects most prudent way of disposing them. To
 keep them close without using or enjoying them at
 all, is a most sottish extravagance, or a strange kind
 of madness; a man thence affecting to be rich quite
 impoverisheth himself, dispossesseth himself of all,
 and alienateth from himself his estateⁱ: his gold is
 no more his than when it was in the Indies, or lay
 hid in the mines; his corn is no more his than if it
 stood growing in Arabia or China; he is no more
 owner of his lands than he is master of Jerusalem,
 or Grand Cairo: for what difference is there, whe-
 ther distance of place, or baseness of mind, sever
 things from him? whether his own heart, or an-
 other man's hand, detain them from his use? whe-
 ther he hath them not at all, or hath them to no
 purpose? whether one is a beggar out of necessity
 or by choice? is pressed to want, or a volunteer
 thereto? Such an one may fancy himself rich, and
 others as wise as himself may repute him so: but so
 distracted persons to themselves, and to one another,
 do seem great princes, and style themselves such;
 with as much reason almost he might pretend to be
 wise, or to be good. Riches are, *χρήματα*, things,
 whose nature consists in usefulness^k; abstract that,
 they become nothing, things of no consideration or
 value; he that hath them is no more concerned in

ⁱ Σκορπιζόμενος δὲ πλοῦτος πέφυκε παραμένειν, συνεχόμενος ἀλλοτριῶται.
 Basil. M.

Tamen deest avaro quod habet, quam quod non habet.

^k Καὶ γὰρ χρήματα διὰ τοῦτο λέγεται, οὐχ ἵνα κατορύθωμεν, ἀλλ' ἵνα εἰς
 δέουντοις χρησώμεθα. Chrys. in Matt. Orat. 49.

m than he that hath them not : it is the art and SERM.
1 to use affluence of things wisely and nobly, XXXI.
ich makes it wealth, and constitutes him rich that Desunt in-
h it ; otherwise the chests may be crammed, and op*i multa,*
barns stuffed full, while the man is miserably avaro om-
r and beggarly : it is in this sense true, which
barns. *Sen. Epist. 108.*

Wise Man says, *There is that maketh himself* ^{Prov. xiii. 7.}
rich, yet hath nothing. But the very having riches
ll such a man say) is matter of reputation ; men
esteem and honour him that hath them. True,
ne knows how, and hath the mind to use them
ll : otherwise all the credit they yield consists in
king their master ridiculous to wise men, and in-
ious among all men. But, putting case that any
uld be so foolish as to respect us merely for seem-
rich, why should we accommodate our practice
their vain opinion, or be base ourselves, because
ers are not wise ? But, however, (may he say
in,) it is a pleasant thing to see them ; a heap of
d is the most lovely spectacle that one can be-
d ; it does a man's heart good to view an abund-
e of good things about him. For this plea, in-
ed, he hath a good author : this, it should seem,
s all the benefit the Wise Man observed in them,
ruing to such persons : *What good, saith he, is* ^{Eccles. v.}
re to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of ^{11.}
m with their eyes ? But if this be all they are
d for, it is, one would think, a very slim benefit
y afford, little able to balance the pain and care
uisite to the acquist and custody of them ; a be-
it indeed not proper to the possessor; for any one
y look on them as well as he, or on the like ; any
e at pleasure may enjoy better sights ; all the
hes and ornaments of nature, the glorious splen-

SERM. dours of heaven, and the sweet beauties of the field,
XXXI. are exposed to common view; the choicest magnificences and gallantries of the world do studiously present themselves to every man's eye; these in part every man truly may appropriate to himself; and by imagination any man can as well take all that he sees for his own, as the tenacious miser doth fancy his dear pelf to be his.

But mine heir (perhaps he will further say) will thank me, will praise me, will bless me for my great care and providence. If he doth, what is that to thee? Nothing of that will concern thee, or can reach thee; thou shalt not hear what he says, or feel any good from what he does: and most probably thou art mistaken in thy opinion concerning him;

*Psal. xxxix. as thou knowest not who he shall be, that shall 6.
Eccles. ii. gather all thou heapest up, or shall rule over all 19.
thy labour, (whether he shall be a wise man or a fool,* a kinsman or a stranger, a friend or a foe,) so thou canst as little guess what he will think or say: if he hath wit, he may sweetly laugh at thee for thy fond wisdom; if he hath none, his commendations will little adorn thy memory; he will to thy disgrace spend what thou leavest, as vainly as thou didst get or keep it. But (this to be sure he will in the end say for himself) money is a good reserve against necessary occasions, or bad times that may come; against a time of old age, of sickness, of adversity; it is the surest friend a man can have in such cases, which, when all fails, will be ready to help him:
Prov. x. 15. The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the Wise Man, he thinks, never spake more wisely; he therefore will not dismantle this fortress, but will keep it well stored, letting therefore his wealth lie dead and

useless by him. But (to let pass now the profane SERM. infidelity of this plea, excluding all hope in God, and substituting our providence in the room of his) what a folly is it thus to anticipate evil, and to create to ourselves a present adversity from a suspicion of one future ; to pinch ourselves now, lest we should suffer hereafter ; to pine to-day, because we can imagine it possible that we may starve to-morrow ; to forego certain occasions of enjoying our goods, for that perchance the like occasions may happen one day, we know not when ; not to use things now, when reason bids us, because they may be useful at another time ! Not considering also, that many intervening accidents, more probably than a moderate and handsome use of our wealth, may crop the excrescences thereof.

2. But setting aside these absurd excuses of penuriousness, we may consider, that, secluding the good use of them in beneficence, riches are very impertinent, very cumbersome, very dangerous, very mischievous things; either superfluous toys, or troublesome clogs, or treacherous snares, or rather all these in combination, productive of trouble, sorrow, and sin. A small pittance will and must suffice, to all reasonable purposes, to satisfy our necessities, to procure conveniences, to yield innocent delight and ease : our nature doth not require, nor can bear much : (*Take heed and beware of covetousness*, Lukexii.15. saith our Lord ; *for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth* ; that is, a man may live well without it :) all the rest, setting beneficence apart, can only serve vanity or vice, will make us really fools and slaves¹. (*They* 1 Tim. vi. 9.

¹ Corporis exigua desideria sunt ; frigus submovere vult, ali-

SERM. *that will be rich*, saith the apostle, *fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*) They puff up our minds with vain and false conceits ; making us, as if we were in a dream or phrensy, to take ourselves for other persons, more great, more wise, more good, more happy than we are ; for constantly, as the Wise Man observed, *The rich man is wise in his own conceit ; Great men are not always wise.* And Agar thus intimates in his prayer, *Remove far from me vanity and lies ; give me neither poverty nor riches.* They render us insensible and forgetful of God, of ourselves, of piety and virtue, of all that is good and worthy of us ; (*Lest I be full*, said that good man again, assigning a reason why he deprecated being rich, *and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord ?*) they swallow up our thoughts, our affections, our endeavours, our time and leisure, possessing our hearts with a doting love unto them, (excluding other good affections,) distracting our minds with anxious cares about them, (choking other good thoughts,) encumbering all our life with business about them, (inconsistent with due attention to our other more weighty and necessary concerns,) filling our heads with suspicions and fears, piercing our hearts with troubles and sorrows ; they immerse our souls in all the follies of pride, in all the filths of luxury, in all the mischiefs emergent from sloth and stupidity ; they are *the root of all evils* unto us, and the greatest obstructions of our true happiness, rendering salvation almost impossible, and heaven in a manner intentis famen ac sitim extinguere ; quicquid extra concupiscitur, vitiis, non usibus, laboratur. *Sen. Cons. ad Helv. 9.*

Matt. vi. 24. Eccles. xxxi. r. Matt. xiii. 22. Luke x. 41. 2 Tim. iii. 4. Jam. v. 5. Luke xvi. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 10. Matt. xix. 23, 24.

cessible to us : so that to be rich (if severed from SERM. sober mind, and a free heart) is a great disease, XXXI. and the source of many grievous distempers both of body and mind ; from which we cannot well otherwise secure or rescue ourselves, than by liberally ^{Αποφίεσαι} pending them in works of bounty and mercy : so ^{τι τοῦ οὐψεως,} shall we ease ourselves of the burdens, so shall we ^{την πίλην,} ^{καυφόντες.} Naz. Or. 27. lude the temptations, so shall we abandon the vices, and so shall we escape all the sad mischiefs incident to them : thus to use wealth shall turn it into a convenience, and an ornament of our lives, into a considerable blessing, and a ground of much comfort to us. Excluding this use of wealth, or abstracting a capacity of doing good therewith, nothing is more pitiful and despicable than it ; it is but like the load or the trappings of an ass : a wise man on that condition would not choose it, or endure to be pestered with it ; but would serve it as those philosophers did, who flung it away, that it might not disturb their contemplations : 'tis the power it affords of benefiting men, which only can season and ingratiate it to the relish of such a person : otherwise it is evidently true, which the Wise Man affirms, Prov. xv.

16. Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure, and trouble therewith.

3. Again ; we may consider, that to dispense our wealth liberally is the best way to preserve it, and to continue masters thereof ; what we give is not thrown away, but saved from danger^m : while we detain it at home (as it seems to us) it really is abroad, and at adventures ; it is out at sea, sailing

^m Μηδὲ νόμιζε τὴν ἐλεημοσύνην ἀνάλυμα εἶναι, ἀλλὰ προσόδον, μηδὲ δασάνην, ἀλλὰ πραγματείαν, μεῖζη γὰρ λαμβάνεις, ἡ δίδωσις, &c. Chrys. tom. v. p. 208.

SERM. XXXI. perilously in storms, near rocks and shelves, amongst pirates ; nor can it ever be safe, till it is brought into this port, or ensured this way : when we have bestowed it on the poor, then we have lodged it in unquestionable safety ; in a place where no rapine, no deceit, no mishap, no corruption can ever by any means come at itⁿ. All our doors and bars, all our forces and guards, all the circumspection and vigilancy we can use, are no defence or security at all in comparison to this disposal thereof : the poor man's stomach is a granary for our corn, which never can be exhausted ; the poor man's back is a wardrobe for our clothes, which never can be pillaged ; the poor man's pocket is a bank for our money, which never can disappoint or deceive us : all the rich traders in the world may decay and break ; but the poor man can never fail, except God himself turn bankrupt ; for what we give to the poor, we deliver and intrust in his hands, out of which no force can wring it, no craft can filch it ; it is laid up in heaven, whither no thief can climb, where no moth or rust do abide. In despite of all the fortune, of all the might, of all the malice in the world, the liberal man will ever be rich : for God's providence is his estate ; God's wisdom and power are his defence ; God's love and favour are his reward ; God's word is his assurance ; who hath said it, that *he which giveth*

Prov. xxviii. 27.

ⁿ Μὴ τοίνυν φειδώμεθα χρημάτων μᾶλλον δὲ φειδώμεθα τῶν χρημάτων ὁ γὰρ φειδόμενος τῶν ὅντων εἰς τὰς τῶν πενήτων χεῖρας, αὐτὰ ἐναποτίθεται, εἰς τὸν ἄσυλον θησαυρὸν καὶ λησταῖς καὶ οἰκέταις καὶ συκοφάνταις κακούργοις, καὶ πάσαις ἐφόδοις ἀνάλωτον. Chrys. tom. v. Orat. 55.

Multi sancti, et sanctæ omnimodo carentes ipsas velut matres deliciarum divitias dispersendo pauperibus abjecerunt, et tali modo in cœlestibus thesaurois tutius condiderunt. Aug. Ep. 121.

to the poor shall not lack: no vicissitude therefore SERM. of things can surprise him, or find him unfurnished; XXXI. no disaster can impoverish him; no adversity can overwhelm him; he hath a certain reserve against all times and occasions: he that *deviseth liberal* Isa. xxxii. 8. *things, by liberal things shall he stand*, saith the prophet. But, on the other hand, being niggardly is the likeliest course we can take to lose our wealth and estate; we thereby expose them to danger, and leave them defenceless; we subject them to the envious eye, to the slanderous tongue, to the ravenous and insidious hand; we deprive them of divine protection, which if it be away, *the watchman waketh* Psal. cxxxvi. 1. *but in vain*: we provoke God irrecoverably to take it from us, as he did the talent from that unprofitable servant, who did not use it well. We do indeed thereby yield God just cause of war and enmity against us; which being, *omnia dat qui justa negat*; we do forfeit all to divine justice, by denying that portion which belongs to him, and which he claims. Can we hope to live in quiet possession of any thing, if we refuse to pay our due tributes and taxes imposed upon us by our almighty Sovereign; if we live in such rebellion against his authority, such violation of his right, such diffidence to his word? No: *He that trusteth in his riches shall fall; but the* Prov. xi. 28. *righteous shall flourish as a branch*: such is the difference between the covetous and the liberal, in point of security and success concerning their estate.

Even according to the human and ordinary way of esteeming things, (abstracting from the special providence of God,) the liberal person hath, in consequence of his bounty, more real security for his wealth, than this world hath any other: he thereby

SER.M. gets an interest in the gratitude and affection of
XXXI. those whom he obligeth, together with the good-will
 and respect of all men, who are spectators of his
 virtuous and generous dealing : the hearts and me-
 mories of men are repositories to him of a treasure,
 which nothing can extort from him, or defraud him
 of. If any mischance should arrive, or any want
 come near him, all men would be ready to commis-
 rate him, every man would hasten to his succour.

*Miraris cum tu argento post omnia ponas, Si nemo pre-
 stet quem non mereat amorem.*
Hor. Serm. i. i.

As when a haughty, a greedy, or a gripple man do
 fall into calamity or disgrace, scarce any one regard-
 eth or pitith him : fortune, deserting such a person,
 carries all with it, few or none stick to him ; his
 most zealous flatterers are commonly the first that
 forsake him ; contempt and neglect are the only
 adherents to his condition ; that of the Wise Man

Prov. xxviii. 27. appears verified, *He that hideth his eyes from the
 poor shall have many a curse.* So the courteous
 and bountiful person, when fortune seems to frown
 on him, bath a sure refuge in the good-will and
 esteem of men ; all men, upon the accounts of ho-
 nour and honesty, take themselves to be concerned
 in his case, and engaged to favour him ; even those,
 who before were strangers, become then his friends,
 and in effect discover their affection to him ; it, in
 the common judgment of people, appears an indig-
 nity and a disgrace to mankind, that such a man
 should want or suffer.

4. Nay further, we may consider, that exercising
 bounty is the most advantageous method of improv-
 ing and increasing an estate ; but that being tena-
 cious and illiberal doth tend to the diminution and
 decay thereof. The way to obtain a great increase
 is, to sow much : he that sows little, how can he ex-

pect a good crop? It is as true in spiritual husbandry as it is in others; that *what a man soweth, that he shall reap*, both in kind and according to proportion: so that great husbandman St. Paul assureth us, *He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly*; ^{2 Cor. ix. 6, 10.} *but he that soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully*: and Solomon means the same, when he saith, *To him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward*. The way to gain abundantly is, you know well, to trade boldly; he that will not adventure any thing considerable, how can he think of a large return? *Honour the Lord with thy substance, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine*, Prov. iii. 9, 10. 'Tis so likewise in the evangelical negotiations; if we put out much upon score of conscience or charity, we shall be sure to profit much. Liberality is the most beneficial traffick that can be; it is bringing our wares to the best market; it is letting out our money into the best hands; we thereby lend our money to God, who repays with vast usury; an hundred to one is the rate he allows at present, and above a hundred millions to one he will render hereafter; so that if you will be merchants this way, you shall be sure to thrive, you cannot fail to grow rich most easily and speedily: *The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered himself*: this is that which St. Paul again argues upon, when, commanding the Philippians' free kindness toward him, he says, *Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account*. Bounty yields καρπὸν πλεονάζοντα, a fruit that multiplies, and abundantly turns to good account; it indeed procuring God's benediction, the

SERM. fountain of all desirable plenty and prosperity ; for
XXXI. *the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he*
Prov. x. 22. *addeth no sorrow with it.* It is therefore the greatest want of policy, the worst ill-husbandry and un-thriftiness that can be, to be sparing this way ; he that useth it cannot be thriving ; he must spend upon the main stock, and may be sure to get nothing considerable. God ordinarily so proceeds, as to recompense and retaliate men in the same kind, wherein they endeavour to please him, or presume to offend him ; so that for them who freely offer him their goods, he in regard thereto will prosper their dealings, and bless their estates : (*For this very thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto,* says Moses :) but they who will not lay out any thing for him, he will not concern himself in their success otherwise than to cross it, or, which is worse, to curse it ; for if he seem to favour them for a time with some prosperity in their affairs, their condition is much worse thereby, their account will be more grievous, and their fate more disastrous in the end.

Deut. xv. *18.* 5. Further, the contributing part of our goods to the poor will qualify us to enjoy the rest with satisfaction and comfort. The oblation of these first-fruits, as it will sanctify the whole lump of our estate, so it will sweeten it ; having offered this well-pleasing sacrifice of piety, having discharged this debt of justice, having paid this tribute of gratitude, our hearts being at rest, and our conscience well satisfied, we shall, like those good people in the Ps. lxxiii. *17.* Acts ii. 46. *Acts, eat our meat with gladness and singleness of heart ;* to see the poor man by our means accommodated, eased, and refreshed, will give a deli-

cious relish to all our enjoyments. But withholding his portion from the poor, as it will pollute and profane all our estate, so it will render the fruition thereof sour or unsavoury to us: for can we with any content taste our dainties, or view our plenties, while the poor man stands in sight pining with hunger^o? Can we without regret see our walls clothed with tapestry, our horses decked with golden trappings, our attendants strutting in wanton gayety, while our honest poor brother appears half naked, and trembling with cold? Can we carry on one finger enough to furnish ten poor people with necessaries, and have the heart within us, without shame and displeasure, to see them want? No; the sense of our impiety and ingratitude toward God, of our inhumanity and unworthiness toward our neighbour, will not fail (if ever we considerately reflect on our behaviour) to sting us with cruel remorse and self-condemnation; the clamours of want and misery surrounding us will pierce our ears, and wound our hearts; the frequent objects of pity and mercy, do what we can to banish them from our prospect or regard, will so assail, and so pursue us, as to disturb the freedom of our enjoyments, to quash the briskness of our mirth, to allay the sweetness of our pleasure; yea rather, if stupidity and obduration have not seized on us, to imbitter all unto us; we shall feel that true, which Zophar speaks of the cruel and covetous oppressor, *Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly—he shall not rejoice in his sub-* Job xx. 18, 20, 22.

^o Ἐγγὺς δὲ πέμπι, εἰς τοῦτον ἀπέρευκαί τι τὸν περιττὸν· τί καὶ σὺ κάμης ἀπεκτᾶν, καὶ οὗτος πεινῶν, καὶ σὺ κραυγαλῶν, καὶ οὗτος ὑδερῶν, καὶ σὺ κάρφῳ βαρύνων, καὶ οὗτος περιτρεψόμενος νόσῳ; Nazian. Orat. 27.

SERM. *stance—in the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be
XXXI. in straits.*

6. I shall touch but one consideration more, persuasive of this practice; it is this: The peculiar nature of our religion specially requires it, and the honour thereof exacts it from us; nothing better suits Christianity, nothing more graces it, than liberality; nothing is more inconsistent therewith, or more disparageth it, than being miserable and sordid. A Christian niggard is the veriest nonsense that can be; for what is a Christian? what, but a man, who adores God alone, who loves God above all things, who reposes all his trust and confidence in God? What is he, but one who undertaketh to imitate the most good and bountiful God; to follow, as the best pattern of his practice, the most benign and charitable JESUS, the Son of God; to obey the laws of God, and his Christ, the sum and substance of which is charity; half whose religion doth consist in loving his neighbour as himself? What is he, further, but one who hath renounced this world, with all the vain pomps and pleasures of it; who professes himself in disposition and affection of mind to forsake all things for Christ's sake; who pretends little to value, affect, or care for any thing under heaven; having all his main concernsments and treasures, his heart, his hopes, and his happiness, in another world? Such is a Christian. And what is a niggard? All things quite contrary: one, whose practice manifestly shews him to worship another thing beside and before God; to love mammon above God, and more to confide in it, than in him; one who bears small good-will, kindness, or pity toward his brother; who is little affected or concerned with things

'future or celestial ; whose mind and heart are rivet- SERM.
ed to this world ; whose hopes and happinesses are XXXI.
settled here below ; whose soul is deeply immersed
and buried in earth ; one who, according to constant
habit, notoriously breaketh the two great heads of
Christian duty, *loving God with all his heart, and*
his neighbour as himself ; it is therefore, by com-
paring those things, very plain, that we pretend to
reconcile gross contradictions and inconsistencies, if
we profess ourselves to be Christians, and are illi-
beral. It is indeed the special grace and glory of
our religion, that it consisteth not in barren specu-
lations, or empty formalities, or forward professions ;
not in fancying curiously, or speaking zealously, or
looking demurely ; but in really producing sensible
fruits of goodness ; in doing, as St. Paul signifies,
things good and profitable unto men, such as those Tit. iii. 8.
chiefly are, of which we speak. The most gracious
wisdom of God hath so modelled our religion, that
according to it piety and charity are the same thing ;
that we can never express ourselves more dutiful
toward him, or better please him, or more truly glo-
rify him, than when we are kind and good to our
poor brother. We grossly mistake, if we take giving
of alms to be a Jewish or popish practice, suitable
to children and dullards in religion, beneath so re-
fined, so improved, so loftily spiritual gallants as
we : no, 'tis a duty most properly and most highly
Christian, as none more, a most goodly fruit of
grace, and a most faithful mark thereof : *By the* 2 Cor. ix.
experiment of this ministration, we, as St. Paul ^{13.}
saith, glorify God for our professed subjection
unto the Gospel of Christ, and for our liberal
distribution unto our brethren and unto all men :

SERM. without it our faith is dead and senseless, our high
XXXI. attainments are fond presumptions, our fine notions
and delicate spiritualities are in truth but silly
dreams, the issues of a proud and ignorant fancy :
he that appears hard-hearted and close-fisted to-
wards his needy brother, let him think or call him-
self what he pleaseth, he plainly is no Christian, but
a blemish, a reproach, and a scandal to that ho-
nourable name.

7. To all these considerations and reasons induc-
ing to the practice of this kind of charity, I might
subjoin examples, and set before you the fairest
copies that can be imagined thereof. We have for
it the pattern of God himself, who is infinitely mu-
nificent and merciful ; *from whom every good and*
^{17.} *perfect gift descendeth; who giveth life, and breath,*
^{25.} *and all things unto all; who giveth liberally, and*
^{9.} *upbraideth not.* We have the example of the Son
of God, who out of pure charity did freely part
with the riches and glories of eternity, voluntarily
embracing extreme poverty and want for our sake,
that we who were poor might be enriched, we that
Acts x. 38. were miserable might become happy ; who *went*
about doing good, spent all his life in painful dis-
pensation of beneficence, and relieving the needs of
men in every kind. We have the blessed patriarchs
to follow, who at God's pleasure and call did readily
leave their country, their friends, their goods, and
all they had. We have the practice of the holy
Matt. xix. apostles, who freely *let go all to follow their*
^{27.} *Lord;* who cheerfully sustained all sorts of losses,
disgraces, and pains, for promoting the honour of
God, and procuring good unto men : we have to
move and encourage us hereto the first and best

Christians, most full of grace and holy zeal, who *so SERM.*
many as were possessors of lands and houses, did ^{XXXI.}
sell them, and did impart the price of them to the ^{Acts iv. 34,}
community, *so that there was none poor among* ^{35.}
them, and that *distribution was made to every one*
as he had need. We have all the saints and emi-
nent servants of God in all times, who have been
high and wonderful in the performance of these
duties. I could tell you of the blessed martyr
St. Cyprian, who was liberal by wholesale, bestow-
ing all at once a fair estate on God and the poor; <sup>Pontius in
vit. Cypr.</sup>
of the renowned bishop St. Basil, who constantly <sup>Greg. Naz.
Orat. 40.</sup>
^{Sulp. Sever.}waited on the sick, and kissed their sores; of the
most pious confessor St. Martin, who having but one
coat left, and seeing a poor man that wanted clothes,
tore it in two pieces, and gave one to that *poor*
man: and many like instances out of authentic his-
tory might be produced, apt to provoke our imita-
tion. I might also, to beget emulation and shame
in us, represent exemplary practices of humanity
and charity even in Jews, Mahometans, and pagans,
(such as in these cold days might pass for more
than ordinary among us;) but I shall only propound
one present and sensible example; that of this noble
city, whose public bounty and charity in all kinds
(in education of orphans, in curing the diseased both
in body and mind, in provision for the poor, in re-
lieving all sorts of necessities and miseries) let me
earnestly entreat and exhort us all for God's sake,
as we are able, by our private charity to imitate, to
encourage, and to assist; let us do this so much the
more willingly and freely, as the sad circumstances
of things, by God's judgments brought upon us, do
plainly require, that the public charity itself (lying

SER.M. under so great impediments, discouragements, and XXXI. distresses) should be supported, supplied, and relieved by particular liberality. No words that I can devise will be so apt to affect and move you, as the case itself, if you please to consider it: hear it therefore speaking, and, I pray, with a pious and charitable disposition of mind attend thereto:

A true report, &c.

For this excellent pattern of pious bounty and mercy, let us heartily thank Almighty God; let us humbly implore God's blessing on the future management of it; let us pay due respects to the worthy promoters thereof, and pray for rewards upon them, answerable to their charitable care and industry employed therein; let us also according to our ability perform our duty in following and furthering it: for encouragement to which practice, give me leave briefly to reflect upon the latter part of my text; which represents some instances of the felicity proper to a bountiful person, or some rewards peculiar to the exercising the duties of bounty and mercy.

The first is, *His righteousness endureth for ever.* These words are capable of various senses, or of divers respects; they may import, that the fame and remembrance of his bounty is very durable, or that the effects thereof do lastingly continue, or that eternal rewards are designed thereto; they may respect the bountiful man himself, or his posterity here; they may simply relate to an endurance in God's regard and care; or they may with that also comprehend a continuance in the good memory and honourable mention of men. Now in truth, according to all these interpretations, the bountiful

man's righteousness doth endure for ever, that is, SERM.
very lastingly, (or so long as the special nature of XXXI.
the case doth bear,) in any sense; or for an absolute
perpetuity in some sense: the words in their plenitude do naturally and without straining involve
so many truths; none of which therefore we think
fit to exclude, but shall briefly touch them all.

1. As for future reputation and fame, (which that it in part is intended here, that which precedes, *The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance,* doth argue,) it is evident, that it peculiarly attends upon this practice: the bountiful person is especially that *just man*, whose *memory is blessed*, (is $\mu\epsilon\tau'$ Prov. x. 7.
ἐγκωμίων, as the Greek renders it; that is, is prosecuted with commendations and praises.) No spices can so embalm a man, no monument can so preserve his name and memory, as works of beneficence; no other fame is comparably so precious, or truly glorious, as that which grows from thence: the renown of power and prowess, of wit or learning, of any wisdom or skill, may dwell in the fancies of men with some admiration: but the remembrance of bounty reigns in their hearts with cordial esteem and affection; there erecting immovable trophies over death and oblivion, and thence spreading itself through the tongues of men with sincere and sprightly commendations. The bountiful man's very dust is fragrant, and his grave venerable; his name is never mentioned without respect; his actions have always these best echoes, with innumerable iterations resounding after them: *His goods shall be established, and the congregation shall declare his alms*, Eccl. xxxii. 11. This was a true friend to mankind; this was a real benefactor

SERM. to the world ; this was a man good in earnest, and
XXXI. pious to good purpose.

2. The effects of his righteousness are likewise very durable : when he is departed hence, and in person is no more seen, he remains visible and sensible in the footsteps and fruits of his goodness ; the poor still beholds him present in the subsistence of himself and his family ; the sick man feels him in the refreshment which he yet enjoys by his provision ; he supervives in the heart of the afflicted, which still resents the comfort, and rejoices in the ease, which he procured him ; all the world derives benefit from him by the edification it receiveth from his example ; religion obtaineth profit and ornament, God himself enjoyeth glory and praise from his righteousness.

3. His righteousness also endureth in respect to his posterity. It is an usual plea for tenacity and parsimony, that care must be had of posterity, that enough must be provided and laid up for the family : but in truth this is a very absurd excuse ; and doing according thereto is a very preposterous method of proceeding toward that end ; it is really the greatest improvidence in that respect, and the truest neglect that can be of our children : for so doing, together with a seeming estate, we entail a real curse upon them : we divest them of God's protection and benediction, (the only sure preservatives of an estate;) we leave them heirs of nothing so much as of punishments due to our ingratitude, our infidelity, our impiety and injustice both toward God and man : whereas by liberally bestowing on the poor, we demise unto them God's blessing, which is the best inheritance ; we recommend them to God's special care, which is the best tuition ; we leave them God's protection and provi-

dence, which are a wealth indefectible and inex- SERM.
haustible; we constitute God their guardian, who XXXI.
will most faithfully manage, and most wisely im-
prove their substance, both that which we leave to
them, and that which we gave for them to the poor;
we thereby in good part entitle them to the rewards
appropriate to our pious charity, our faith, our gra-
titude, our self-denial, our justice, to whatever of
good is virtually contained in our acts of bounty; to
omit the honour and good-will of men, which con-
stantly adhere to the bountiful man's house and fa-
mily. Prov. xiii. 22. *A good man leaveth an inhe-
ritance to his children's children.* It is therefore
expressly mentioned in scripture as a recompense
peculiar to this virtue, that security from want and
all happiness do attend the posterity of the bountiful
person: *He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his* Ps. xxxvii.
seed is blessed, saith David of him generally: and
David also particularly observed, that in all the
course of his long life he could find no exception to
the rule: *I have been young, and now am old; yet* Ps. xxxvii.
have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his ^{25.}
seed begging their bread.

4. His righteousness also endureth for ever in the
perpetual favour of God, and in the eternal rewards
which God will confer upon him, who, out of con-
science and reverence toward God, out of good-will
and kindness toward his brother, hath dispersed, and
given to the poor. *God will not,* as the apostle Heb. vi. 10.
saith, *be unjust to forget his labour of charity in*
ministering to his poor brother: from the seed
which he *hath sown to the Spirit,* he shall assuredly Gal. vi. 8.
reap a most plentiful crop of blessings spiritual; he
shall effectually enjoy *the good foundation* that he Tim. vi.
hath *stored up:* for the goods he hath sold and de- ^{19.}

SERM. livered, he shall *bona fide* receive his bargain, *the XXXI. hidden treasure* and *precious pearl* of eternal life;

Matt. xiii. for this best improvement of his talent of worldly

^{46.} Matt. xxv. riches, he shall hear the *Euge bone serve, Well*

^{21, 23.} *done, good and faithful servant, enter into thy*

master's joy: he shall at last find God infinitely more bountiful to him, than he hath been unto the poor.

Thus when all the flashes of sensual pleasure are quite extinct; when all the flowers of secular glory are withered away; when all earthly treasures are buried in darkness; when this world and all the fashion of it are utterly vanished and gone, the bountiful man's state will still be firm and flourishing, and *his righteousness shall endure for ever.*

It follows, *His horn shall be exalted with honour.*

A horn is an emblem of power; for in it the beasts' strength, offensive and defensive, doth consist; and of plenty, for it hath within it a capacity apt to con-

¹ Sam. xvi. tain what is put into it; and of sanctity, for that in

^{13.} ¹ Kings i. it was put the holy oil, with which kings were con-

^{39.}secrated; and of dignity, both in consequence upon the reasons mentioned, (as denoting might, and influence, and sacredness accompanying sovereign dignity,) and because also it is an especial beauty and ornament to the creature which hath it; so that this expression (*His horn shall be exalted with honour*) may be supposed to import, that an abundance of high and holy, of firm and solid honour shall attend upon the bountiful person. And that so it truly shall, may from many considerations appear.

1. Honour is inseparably annexed thereto, as its natural companion and shadow. God hath impressed upon all virtue a majesty and a beauty, which do command respect, and with a kindly violence extort

veneration from men : such is the natural constitution SERM. of our souls, that as our sense necessarily liketh what XXXI. is fair and sweet, so our mind unavoidably will esteem what is virtuous and worthy ; all good actions as such are honourable : but of all virtues, beneficence doth with most unquestionable right claim honour, and with irresistible force procures it ; as it is indeed the most divine of virtues, so men are most apt to venerate them, whom they observe eminently to practise it. Other virtues men see, and approve φιλονηται; χαράν μά-
λιστα δι-
λαυδίστεραι
εὖ λατή-
σῆς, ἀφιλο-
μαγέρε.
Arist.
Matt. vi. 1.

as goodly to the sight ; but this they taste and feel ; this by most sensible experience they find to be pleasant and profitable, and cannot therefore but highly prize it. They, who *do their alms before men*, although out of an unworthy vain-glorious design, *have yet, as our Saviour intimates, their reward* ; they fail not to get honour thereby ; and even so have no bad pennyworth : for, in the Wise Man's judgment, *a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches* ; they receive at least fine air, for gross earth ; and things very spiritual, for things most material ; they obtain that which every man doth naturally desire and prize, for that which only fashion in some places endeareth and commendeth : they get the end for the means ; for scarce οἱ γὰρ δυν-
αρτίσται καὶ δι-
σλῶντες διὰ
τὴν τιμὴν
ἰστοντες.
Arist.

any man seeketh wealth for itself, but either for honour, or for virtue's sake, that he may live creditably, or may do good therewith : necessity is served with a little, pleasure may be satisfied with a competence ; abundance is required only to support honour or promote good ; and honour by a natural connection adhereth to bounty. *He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.* Prov. xxi. 21.

SERM. 2. But further, an accession of honour, according
XXXI. to gracious promise, (grounded upon somewhat of
special reason, of equity and decency in the thing
itself,) is due from God unto the bountiful person,
and is by special providence surely conferred on him.
There is no kind of piety, or instance of obedience,
whereby God himself is more signally honoured,
Matt. v. 16. than by this. These are chiefly those *good works*,
the which *men seeing*, are apt to *glorify our Father*
which is in heaven. Phil. i. 11. *Being filled with*
the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ
Jesus to the glory and praise of God. To these
fruits that is most applicable which our Lord saith,
John xv. 8. *Hereby is my Father glorified, if ye bear much*
Prov. xiv. ^{31.} *fruit; for as he that oppresseth the poor reproach-*
eth his Maker; so he honoureth him, that hath
mercy on the poor. The comfortable experience of
good in this sort of actions will most readily dispose
men to admire and commend the excellency, the
wisdom, the goodness of the divine laws, will therefore
procure God hearty praise and thanks for them: for,
2 Cor. ix. ^{12, 13.} as St. Paul teacheth us, *The administration of his*
service not only supplieth the want of the saints,
but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto
God; whilst by experiment of this ministration,
they glorify God for your professed subjection unto
the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distri-
bution unto them, and unto all men. Since then God
is so peculiarly honoured by this practice, it is but
equal and fit that God should remunerate it with
honour: God's noble goodness will not let him seem
defective in any sort of beneficial correspondence
toward us; we shall never be able to yield him any
kind of good thing in duty, which he will not be

more apt to render us in grace; they who, as Solomon speaketh, honour God with their substance, shall by God certainly be honoured with his blessing: reason intimates so much, and we beside have God's express word for it: *Them*, saith he, *who honour me, I will honour*. He that absolutely and independently is the fountain of all honour, from whom, as good king David saith, *riches and honour cometh*, for that *he reigneth over all*, he will assuredly prefer and dignify those, who have been at special care and cost to advance his honour. He that hath the *hearts of all men in his hands, and fashioneth them* as he pleaseth, will raise the bountiful man in the judgments and affections of men. He that ordereth all the events of things, and disposeth success as he thinks fit, will cause the bountiful person's enterprises to prosper, and come off with credit. He will not suffer the reputation of so real an honourer of himself to be extremely slurred by disaster, to be blasted by slander, to be supplanted by envy or malice; but will bring forth *his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noon-day.*

3. God will thus exalt the bountiful man's horn even here in this world, and to an infinitely higher pitch he will advance it in the future state: he shall there be set at the right hand, in a most honourable place and rank, among the chief friends and favourites of the heavenly King, in happy consortship with the holy angels and blessed saints; where, in recompence of his pious bounty, he shall, from the bountiful hands of his most gracious Lord, receive *an incorruptible crown of righteousness, and an unfading crown of glory.* The which God

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SERM. of his infinite mercy grant unto us all, through Jesus
XXXI. Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all praise.
Amen.

Heb. xiii.
20, 21. *Now the God of peace, that brought again from
the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of
the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting
covenant, make us perfect in every good work to
do his will, working in us that which is well-pleas-
ing in his sight, through Jesus Christ : to whom
be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

SERMON XXXII.

UPON THE PASSION OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR.

PHIL. ii. 8.

*And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself,
and became obedient unto death, even the death of the
cross.*

WHEN, in consequence of the original apostasy SERM.
from God, which did banish us from paradise, and XXXII.
by continued rebellions against him, inevitable to Cyril. c.
our corrupt and impotent nature, mankind had for- Jul. viii. p.
feited the amity of God, (the chief of all goods, the 278. ix. p.
fountain of all happiness,) and had incurred his dis- 303.
pleasure; (the greatest of all evils, the foundation John iii. 36.
of all misery :)

When poor man having deserted his natural Lord Iren. iii. 33.
and Protector, *other lords had got dominion over* ^{34.} Isa. xxvi.
him, so that he was captivated by the foul, malicious, ^{13.} Iren. iii. 8.
cruel spirits, and enslaved to his own vain mind, to
vile lusts, to wild passions :

When, according to an eternal rule of justice, that Gen. iv. 7.
sin deserveth punishment, and by an express law, ^{ii. 17.}
wherein death was enacted to the transgressors of
God's command, the root of our stock, and conse- Iren. v. 16.
quently all its branches, stood adjudged to utter de- struction :

SERM. When, according to St. Paul's expressions, *all the world was become guilty before God*, (or, sub-

Rom. iii. 19. *πάντες τοις τις τις οὐδὲν.* tiles) were under sin, under condemnation, under the curse; all men were concluded into disobedience, and shut up together (as close prisoners)

Rom. iii. 9. v. 16, 18. Gal. iii. 10. Rom. xi. 82. οὐδὲν οὐδὲν. under sin; all men had sinned, and come short of the glory of God: death had passed over all, because all had sinned:

Gal. iii. 22. Rom. iii. 23. v. 12. When for us, being plunged into so wretched a condition, no visible remedy did appear, no possible redress could be obtained here below: (for what means could we have of recovering God's favour, who were apt perpetually to contract new debts and guilts, but not able to discharge any old scores? What capacity of mind or will had we to entertain mercy, who were no less stubbornly perverse and obdurate in our crimes, than ignorant or infirm? How could we be reconciled unto Heaven, who had

Rom. vi. 12, 14, 20. Rom. vii. 18, 5. Rom. vii. 23. an innate antipathy to God and goodness? [*Sin, according to our natural state, and secluding evangelical grace, reigning in our mortal bodies, no good thing dwelling in us; there being a predominant law in our members, warring against the law*

Rom. vi. 6. Coloss. iii. 9. Ephes. iv. 22. Rom. viii. 7. *of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin; a main ingredient of our old man being a carnal mind, which is enmity to God, and cannot submit to his law; we being alienated from the life of God by the blindness of our hearts, and enemies in our minds by wicked works:]*

Ephes. iv. 18. Coloss. i. 21. Rom. v. 10. How could we revive to any good hope, who were *dead in trespasses and sins*, God having withdrawn his quickening Spirit? How at least could we for one moment stand upright in God's sight, upon the na-

tural terms, excluding all sin, and exacting perfect SERM.
obedience ?)

XXXII.

When this, I say, was our forlorn and desperate case, then Almighty God, out of his infinite goodness, was pleased to look upon us (as he sometime did upon Jerusalem, *lying polluted in her blood*) with an eye of pity and mercy, so as graciously to design a redemption for us out of all that woful distress: and no sooner by his incomprehensible wisdom did he foresee we should lose ourselves, than by his immense grace he did conclude to restore us.

But how could this happy design well be compassed? How, in consistence with the glory, with the justice, with the truth of God, could such enemies be reconciled, such offenders be pardoned, such wretches be saved? Would the omnipotent Majesty, so affronted, design to treat with his rebels immediately, without an intercessor or advocate? Would the sovereign Governor of the world suffer thus notoriously his right to be violated, his authority to be slighted, his honour to be trampled on, without some notable vindication or satisfaction? Would the great Patron of justice relax the terms of it, or ever permit a gross breach thereof to pass with impunity? Would the immutable God of truth expose his veracity or his constancy to suspicion, by so reversing that peremptory sentence of death upon sinners, that it should not in a sort eminently be accomplished? Would the most righteous and most holy God let slip an opportunity so advantageous for demonstrating his perfect love of innocence, and abhorrence of iniquity? Could we therefore well be cleared from our guilt without an expiation, or reinstated in freedom without a ran-

SERM. som, or exempted from condemnation without some
XXXII. punishment?

No: God was so pleased to prosecute his designs of goodness and mercy, as thereby nowise to impair or obscure, but rather to advance and illustrate the glories of his sovereign dignity, of his severe justice, of his immaculate holiness, of his unchangeable steadiness in word and purpose. He accordingly would be sued to for peace and mercy: nor would he grant them absolutely, without due compensations for the wrongs he had sustained; yet so, that his goodness did find us a Mediator, and furnish us with means to satisfy him. He would not condescend to a simple remission of our debts; yet so, that, saving his right and honour, he did stoop lower for an effectual abolition of them. He would make good his word, not to let our trespasses go unpunished; yet so, that by our punishment we might receive advantage. He would manifest his detestation of wickedness in a way more illustrious than if he had persecuted it down to hell, and irreversibly doomed it to endless torment.

But how might these things be effected? Where was there a Mediator proper and worthy to intercede for us? Who could presume to solicit and plead in our behalf? Who should dare to put himself between God and us, or offer to screen mankind from the divine wrath and vengeance? Who had so great an interest in the court of heaven, as to ingratiate such a brood of apostate enemies thereto? Who could assume the confidence to propose terms of reconciliation, or to agitate a new covenant, wherewith God might be satisfied, and whereby we might be saved? Where, in heaven or earth, could there be found a

priest fit to atone for sins so vastly numerous, so extremely heinous? And whence should a sacrifice be taken, of value sufficient to expiate for so manifold enormities, committed against the infinite Majesty of Heaven? Who could *find out the everlasting re-*^{λιαντας λιγ-}
demption of innumerable souls, or lay down a com-^{τρεποντας λιγ-}
petent ransom for them all? Not to say, could also purchase for them eternal life and bliss?^{μην. Heb. ix. 12.}

These are questions which would puzzle all the wit of man, yea, would gravel all the wisdom of angels to resolve: for plain it is, that no creature on earth, none in heaven, could well undertake or perform this work.

Where on earth, among the degenerate sons of Adam, could be found *such an high priest as became us, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners?*^{Heb. vii. 26.} and how could a man, however innocent and pure as a seraphim, so perform his duty, as to do more than merit or satisfy for himself? How many lives could the life of one man serve to ransom; seeing that it is asserted of the greatest and richest among men, that *none of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him.*^{Psal. xlix. 7.}

And how could available help in this case be expected from any of the angelical host; seeing (beside their being in nature different from us, and thence improper to merit or satisfy for us; beside their comparative meanness, and infinite distance from the majesty of God) they are but our fellow-servants, and have obligations to discharge for themselves, and cannot be solvent for more than for their own debts of gratitude and service to their infinitely-bountiful Creator; they also themselves needing a Saviour, to preserve them by his grace in their happy state?

SERM. XXXII. Indeed, no creature might aspire to so august an honour, none could achieve so marvellous a work, as to redeem from infinite guilt and misery the noblest part of all the visible creation : none could presume to invade that high prerogative of God, or attempt to infringe the truth of that reiterated proclamation,
I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour.
 Isa. xliii.
 11. xlv. 21.
 Hos. xiii. 4.

Wherefore, seeing that a supereminent dignity of person was required in our Mediator, and that an immense value was to be presented for our ransom ;
 Isa. lix. 16. ^{messengers,} ~~messengers,~~ seeing that *God saw there was no man, and wondered* (or took special notice) *that there was no intercessor* ; it must be *his arm alone* that could *bring salvation* ; none beside God himself could intermeddle therein.

But how could God undertake the business ? Could he become a suitor or intercessor to his offended self ? Could he present a sacrifice, or disburse a satisfaction to his own justice ? Could God alone contract and stipulate with God in our behalf ? No ; surely man also must concur in the transaction : some amends must issue from him, somewhat must be paid out of our stock : human will and consent must be interposed, to ratify a firm covenant with us, inducing obligation on our part. It was decent and expedient, that as man, by wilful transgression and presumptuous self-pleasing, had so highly offended, injured, and dishonoured his Maker ; so man also, by willing obedience, and patient submission to God's pleasure, should greatly content, right, and glorify him.

Ephes. i. 8.
 Luke i. 78.
 Ephes. i. 5.
 Tit. iii. 4.
 Rom. v. 8.
 Gal. iv. 4.

Here then did lie the stress ; this was the knot, which only Divine wisdom could loose. And so in deed it did in a most effectual and admirable way :

in correspondence to all the exigencies of the S.E.R.M.
 , (that God and man both might act their parts XXXII.
 aving us,) the blessed eternal Word, the only Son John vi. 38.
Heb. x. 7.
 God, by the good-will of his Father, did vouchsafe John i. 14.
Heb. v. 2.
iv. 15.
 intercede for us, and to undertake our redemption ; Ephes. i. 6.
Const. A-
post. viii.
12.
 order thereto voluntarily being sent down from 1 Tim. ii. 6.
Tit. ii. 14.
Heb. ix. 15.
ii. 9.
Col. i. 22.
 heaven, assuming human flesh, subjecting himself to the infirmities of our frail nature, and to the worst
inconveniences of our low condition ; therein merit-
 God's favour to us, by a perfect obedience to the Col. i. 22.
 , and satisfying God's justice by a most patient
 urance of pains in our behalf; in completion of
 willingly laying down his life for the ransom of
 souls, and pouring forth his blood in sacrifice for
 sins.

This is that great and wonderful *mystery of god-<sup>1 Tim. iii.
ss,</sup>* (or of our holy religion,) the which St. Paul ^{16.}
 e doth express, in these words concerning our
 sed Saviour ; *Who being in the form of God,
 ought it no robbery to be equal with God ; but
 de himself of no reputation, and took upon him
 form of a servant, and was made in the likeness
 men : and being found in fashion as a man, he
 nbled himself, and became obedient unto death,
 n the death of the cross.*

In which words are contained divers points very
 ervable. But seeing the time will not allow me
 treat on them in any measure as they deserve, I
 ll (waving all the rest) insist but upon one par-
 llar, couched in the last words, *even the death of* Θανάτου
cross ; which by a special emphasis do excite us ἢ σταύρου.
 consider the manner of that holy passion which
 now commemorate ; the contemplation whereof,
 it is most seasonable, so it is ever very profitable.

SERM. Now then in this kind of passion we may consider
XXXII. divers notable adjuncts ; namely these : 1. Its being
in appearance criminal. 2. Its being most bitter and
painful. 3. Its being most ignominious and shameful.
4. Its peculiar advantageousness to the designs of our
Lord in suffering. 5. Its practical efficacy.

I. We may consider our Lord's suffering as criminal ; or as in semblance being an execution of
Isa. liii. 12. justice upon him. *He, as the prophet foretold of him,*
was numbered among the transgressors ; and God,
2 Cor. v. 21. *said St. Paul, made him sin for us, who knew no*
sin : that is, God ordered him to be treated as a most
sinful or criminous person, who in himself was per-
fectly innocent, and void of the least inclination to
offend.

John v. 18. So in effect it was, that he was impeached of the
x. 30, &c.
vii. 12. highest crimes ; as a violator of the divine laws in
Matt. xxvi.
61. divers instances ; as a designer to subvert their reli-
40.
Luke xxiii. gion and temple ; as an impostor, deluding and se-
2.
Matt. xxvii. ducing the people ; as a blasphemer, assuming to him-
63.
Const. A-
post. v. 14. self the properties and prerogatives of God ; as a se-
~~zazwus~~. ditious and rebellious person, *perverting the nation,*
John xviii. inhibiting payments of tribute to Cæsar, usurping
30. royal authority, and styling himself *Christ a king* :
in a word, as a malefactor, or one guilty of enormous
offences ; so his persecutors avowed to Pilate, *If, said*
they, he were not a malefactor, we would not have
delivered him up unto thee. As such he was repre-
sented and arraigned ; as such, although by a sentence
wrested by malicious importunity, against the will
and conscience of the judge, he was condemned, and
accordingly suffered death.

Now whereas any death or passion of our Lord,
as being in itself immensely valuable, and most pre-

rious in the sight of God, might have been sufficient SERM. toward the accomplishment of his general designs, XXXII. (the appeasing God's wrath, the satisfaction of divine justice, the expiation of our guilt;) it may be inquired, why God should thus expose him, or why he should choose to suffer under this odious and ugly character^x? Which inquiry is the more considerable, because it is especially this circumstance which crosseth the fleshly sense and worldly prejudices of men, so as to have rendered the gospel offensive to the superstitious Jews, and despicable to conceited Gentiles. For so Tryphon in Justin Martyr, although, from conviction by testimonies of scripture, he did admit the Messias was to suffer *hardly*, yet that it should be in this *accursed* manner, he could not digest. So the great adversaries of Christianity Orig. c. (Celsus, Porphyry, Julian) did with most contempt Cels. ii. p. 83. vii. p. urge this exception against it. So St. Paul did ob- 368. Aug. de Civ. D. serve, that *Christ crucified was unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness.* vi. p. 194. Cyril. c. Jul. 1 Cor. i. 23. Wherefore, to avoid those scandals, and that we may better admire the wisdom of God in this dispensation, it may be fit to assign some reasons intimated in holy scripture, or bearing conformity to its doctrine, why it was thus ordered. Such are these.

1. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of greatest meanness and hardship, so upon the like accounts he might be pleased to undergo a death most loathsome and uncomfortable. There is nothing to man's nature (especially to the best natures, in which modesty and ingenuity do survive) more abominable

^x Cur si Deus fuit, et mori voluit, non saltem honesto aliquo mortis genere affectus est? &c. *Lact.* iv. 26. *Just. M. Dial.* p. 317.

SERM. than such a death. God for good purposes hath
XXXII. planted in our constitution a quick sense of disgrace; and, of all disgraces, that which proceedeth from an imputation of crimes is most pungent; and being conscious of our innocence doth heighten the smart; and to reflect upon ourselves dying under it, leaving the world with an indelible stain upon our name and memory, is yet more grievous. Even to languish by degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however sharp disease, would to an honest mind seem more eligible, than in this manner, being reputed and handled as a villain, to find a quick and easy despatch.

Luke xxii. Of which human resentment may we not observe
^{52.} *Matt. xxvi.* a touch in that expostulation, *Be ye come out, as
 55. against a thief, with swords and staves?* If as a man he did not like to be prosecuted as a thief; yet willingly did he choose it, as he did other most distasteful things pertaining to our nature, (*the likeness of man,*) and incident to that low condition, (*the form of a servant,*) into which he did put himself: such as were, to endure penury, and to fare hardly, to be slighted, envied, hated, reproached through all his course of life.

It is well said by a pagan philosopher, that *no man doth express such a respect and devotion to virtue, as doth he who forfeiteth the repute of being a good man, that he may not lose the conscience of being such^y.* This our Lord willingly made his case, being content not only to expose his life, but to prostitute his fame, for the interests of goodness.

^y Nemo mihi videtur pluris aestimare virtutem, nemo illi magis esse devotus, quam qui boni viri famam perdidit, ne conscientiam perderet. *Sen. Ep. 81.*

Had he died otherwise, he might have seemed to SERM.
purchase our welfare at a somewhat easier rate; he XXXII.
had not been so complete a sufferer; he had not
tasted the worst that man is liable to endure: there
had been a comfort in seeming innocent, detracting
from the perfection of his sufferance.

Whereas therefore he often was in hazard of John v. 18.
death, both from the clandestine machinations and viii. 37, 40,
the outrageous violences of those who maligned him, 59. vii. 1,
^{19, 25. x.}_{32, 39.}
he did industriously shun a death so plausible, and
honourable, if I may so speak; it being not so dis-
graceful to fall by private malice, or by sudden rage,
as by the solemn deliberate proceeding of men in
public authority and principal credit.

Accordingly this kind of death did not fall upon
him by surprise or by chance; but he did *from the* John vi. 64.
beginning foresee it; he plainly with satisfaction
did aim at it: he, as it is related in the Gospels, did
shew his disciples, that it was incumbent on him by
God's appointment and his own choice; that *he* Matt. xvi.
ought, it is said, *to suffer many things, to be re-*^{21.}
jected by the chief priests, elders, and scribes, to Luke ix. 22.
be vilified by them, to be delivered up to the Gen-
tiles, to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, as
a flagitious slave. Thus would our blessed Saviour,
in conformity to the rest of his voluntary afflictions,
and for a consummation of them, not only suffer in
his body by sore wounds and bruises, and in his
soul by doleful agonies, but in his name also and
reputation by the foulest scandals; undergoing as
well all the infamy as the infirmity which did be-
long to us, or might befall us: thus meaning by all
means throughly to express his charity, and exer-
cise his compassion towards us; thus advancing his

SERM. merit, and discharging the utmost satisfaction in our
XXXII. behalf.

2. Death passing on him as a malefactor by public sentence, did best suit to the nature of his undertaking, was most congruous to his intent, did most aptly represent what he was doing, and imply the reason of his performance. For we all are guilty in a most high degree, and in a manner very notorious; the foulest shame, together with the sharpest pain, is due to us for affronting our glorious Maker; we deserve an open condemnation and exemplary punishment: wherefore he, undertaking in our stead to bear all, and fully to satisfy for us, was pleased to undergo the like judgment and usage; being termed, being treated as we should have been, in quality of an heinous malefactor, as we in truth are. What we had really acted in dishonouring and usurping upon God, in disordering the world, in perverting others, that was imputed to him; and the punishment due Isa. liii. 6. to that guilt was inflicted on him. *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* He therefore did not only sustain an equivalent pain for us, but in a sort did bear an equal blame with us, before God and man.

Acts ii. 23. 3. Seeing, *by the determinate counsel of God*, it was appointed that our Lord should die for us, and that not in a natural, but violent way, so as perfectly to satisfy God's justice, to vindicate his honour, to evidence both his indignation against sin, and willingness to be appeased; it was most fit that affair should be transacted in a way, wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most plainly discernible; wherein it should be most

apparent that God did exact and inflict the punishment, that our Lord did freely yield to it, and submissively undergo it, upon those very accounts. All judgment, as Moses of old did say, *is God's*, or is administered by authority derived from him, in his name, for his interest; all magistrates being his officers and instruments, whereby he governeth and ordereth the world, his natural kingdom: whence that which is acted in way of formal judgment by persons in authority, God himself may be deemed in a more special and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commission, in his stead, on his behalf, with his peculiar superintendence. It was therefore in our Lord a signal act of deference to God's authority and justice, becoming the person sustained by him of our Mediator and Proxy, to undergo such a judgment, and such a punishment; whereby he received a doom as it were from God's own mouth, uttered by his ministers, and bare the stroke of justice from God's hand, represented by his instruments. Whence very seasonably and patiently did he reply to Pilate, *Thou hadst no power over me, (or against me) except it were given thee from above:* implying that it was in regard to the originally supreme authority of God his father, and to his particular appointment upon this occasion, that our Saviour did then frankly subject himself to those inferior powers, as to the proper ministers of divine justice. Had he suffered in any other way, by the private malice or passion of men, God's special providence in that case had been less visible, and our Lord's obedience not so remarkable. And if he must die by public hands, it must be as a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit; there must be a

John xix.
11. xxv.

SERM. formal process, how full soever of mockery and ~~ou~~
XXXII. rage ; there must be testimonies produced, how ~~ve~~
 soever of truth or probability ; there must be a se
 tence pronounced, although most corrupt and inju
 ous : for no man is in this way persecuted, witho
 colour of desert: otherwise it would cease to be pub
 authority, and become lawless violence ; the per
 cutor then would put off the face of a magistrat
 and appear as a cut-throat or a robber.

4. In fine, our Saviour hardly with such advantag
 in any other way, could have displayed all kinds
 virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, to the ed
 ification of men, to the furtherance of our salvation

The judgment-hall, with all the passages leadin
 him thither, and thence to execution, attended wi
 guards of soldiers, amidst the crowds and clamou
 of people, were as so many theatres, on which he ha
 opportune convenience, in the full eye of the worl
^{John xviii.} to act divers parts of sublimest virtue : to expre
^{37.}
^{1 Tim. vi. 13.} his insuperable constancy, in attesting truth, a
 maintaining a good conscience ; his meekness,
 calmly bearing the greatest wrongs ; his patience,
 contentedly enduring the saddest adversities ; his e
 tire resignation to the will and providence of God
 his peaceable submission to the law and power
 man ; his admirable charity, in pitying, in excusin
 in obliging those by his good wishes, and earne
 prayers for their pardon, who in a manner so inj
 ous, so despiteful, so cruel, did persecute him, ye
 in gladly suffering all this from their hands for the
 salvation ; his unshakeable faith in God, and unalte
 able love toward him, under so fierce a trial, :
 dreadful a temptation. All these excellent virtud
 and graces, by the matter being thus ordered, in

degree most eminent, and in a manner very conspi- SERM.
cuous, were demonstrated to the praise of God's name, XXXII.
and the commendation of his truth; for the settle-
ment of our faith and hope, for an instruction and
an encouragement to us of good practice in those
highest instances of virtue.

It is a passable notion among the most eminent pagan sages, that no very exemplary virtue can well appear otherwise than in notable misfortune. Whence it is said in Plato, that to approve a man heartily *righteous, he must be scourged, tortured, bound, have his two eyes burnt out, and in the close, having suffered all evils, must be impaled, or crucified*^a. And, *It was, saith Seneca, the cup of poison which made Socrates a great man, and which out of prison did transfer him to heaven*^a, or did procure to him that lofty esteem, affording him opportunity to signalize his constancy, his equanimity, his unconcernedness for this world and life. And, *The virtue, saith he again, and the innocence of Rutilius would have lain hid, if it had not (by condemnation and exile) received injury; while it was violated, it brightly shone forth*^b. And he that said this of others, was himself in nothing so illustrious, as in handsomely

^a Magnum exemplum nisi mala fortuna non invenit. *Sen. de Prov. c. 3.*

'Ο δίκαιος μαστιγώσεται, στρεβλώσεται, θεήσεται, ἐκκαυθήσεται τὸ ὄφθαλμό, τελευτῶν πάντα κακὰ παθὼν ἀνασχινδίλευθήσεται. *Plat. de Rep. 2.*

^a Cicutæ magnum Socratem fecit. *Sen. Ep. 13.*

Calix venenatus, qui Socratem transtulit e carcere in coelum. *Sen. Ep. 67.*

Æqualis fuit in tanta inæqualitate fortunæ, &c. *Sen. Ep. 104.*

^b Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret, nisi accepisset injuriam; dum violatur, effulsit. *Sen. Ep. 79.*

SERM. entertaining that death to which he was by the
XXXII. bloody tyrant adjudged. And generally, the most honourable persons in the judgment of posterity for gallant worth, to this very end (as such philosophers teach) were by divine Providence delivered up to suffer opprobrious condemnations and punishments, by the ingrateful malignity of their times. So that the Greeks, in consistence with their own wisdom and experience, could not reasonably scorn that cross which our good Lord (did not only, as did their best worthies, by forcible accidental constraint undergo, but) advisedly by free choice did undertake, to recommend the most excellent virtues to imitation, and to promote the most noble designs that could be, by its influence.

Sen. de
Prov. 2, 3,
&c.
Plut. de
Stoic.
Contr. Ep.
1931.

So great reason there was that our Lord should thus suffer as a criminal.

II. We may consider, that in that kind his suffering was most bitter and painful. Easily we may imagine what acerbity of pain must be endured by our Lord in his tender limbs being stretched forth, racked, and tentered, and continuing for a good time Ps. xxii. 16. in such a posture ; by the *piercing his hands and his feet*, parts very nervous and exquisitely sensible, with Ps. cv. 18. sharp nails, (so that, as it is said of Joseph, *the iron entered into his soul*;) by abiding exposed to the injuries of the sun scorching, the wind beating, the weather searching his grievous wounds and sores. Such a pain it was ; and that no stupifying, no transient pain, but one both very acute and lingering : for we see, that he together with his fellow-sufferers had both presence of mind and time to discourse. Even six long hours did he remain under such torture, sustaining in each moment of them beyond the

Mark xv.
25, 34.

pangs of an ordinary death. But as the case was so hard and sad, so the reason of it was great, and the fruit answerably good. Our Saviour did embrace such a passion, that, in being thus content to endure the most intolerable smarts for us, he might demonstrate the vehemence of his love ; that he might signify the heinousness of our sins, which deserved that from such a person so heavy punishment should be exacted ; that he might appear to yield a valuable compensation for those pains which we should have suffered ; that he throughly might exemplify the hardest duties of obedience and patience.

III. This manner of suffering was (as most sharp and afflictive, so) most vile and shameful ; being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and unworthy of a freeman, however nocent and guilty^c. It was *servile supplicium*, a punishment never by the Romans, under whose law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon freemen, but upon slaves only ; that is, upon people scarcely regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited or lost themselves. And among the Jews that execution which most approached thereto, and in part agreed with it, (for their law did not allow any so inhuman punishment,) hanging up the dead bodies of some that had been put to death, was held most infamous and execrable : for, *Cursed*, Deut. xxii. 23. Gal. iii. 13. said the law, *is every one that hangeth upon a tree* ; cursed, that is, devoted to reproach and malediction ; *Accursed by God*, saith the Hebrew, that is, seeming to be rejected by God, and by his special order exposed to affliction.

Indeed, according to the course of things, to be

^c Quod etiam homine libero, quamvis nocente, videatur indignum. *Lact.* iv. 26.

Τοῦτο γάρ
μόνον τὰς
ταλαιπωρίας
ιδεῖσθαι.
Chrys. tom.
vi. Or. 61.

SERM. set on high, and for continuance of time to be ob-
XXXII. jected to the view of all that pass by, in that cala-
mitous posture, doth infuse bad suspicion, doth pro-
voke censure, doth invite contempt and scorn, doth
naturally draw forth language of derision, despite, and
detestation; especially from the inconsiderate, hard-
hearted, and rude vulgar, which commonly doth
think, speak, and deal according to event and ap-
pearance: (*—Sequitur fortunam semper, et odit
damnatos*) whence θεατρίζεσθαι, to be made a gaz-
ing-stock, or an object of reproach to the multitude,
is by the apostle mentioned as an aggravation of the
hardships endured by the primitive Christians. And
thus in extremity did it befall our Lord: for we
read, that the people did in that condition mock,
jeer, and revile him, drawing up their noses, abusing
him by scurrilous gestures, letting out their virulent
35, 36.
Matt. xxvii. and wanton tongues against him; so as to verify
39.
Psal. xxii. that prediction, *I am a reproach of men, and de-*
6, 7, 8.
Matt. ix.
33. xxi. 9.
xii. 23. *spised of the people. All they that see me laugh
me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the
head, saying, He trusted in the Lord: let him de-
liver him, seeing he delighted in him.*

The same persons who formerly had admired his
glorious works, who had been ravished with his ex-
cellent discourses, who had followed and favoured
him so earnestly, who had blessed and magnified
him, (*for he*, saith St. Luke, *taught in the syn-*
agogues, being glorified by all,) even those very
persons did then behold him with pitiless contempt
and despite. In correspondence to that prophecy,
they look and stare upon me, εἰστήκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν,
Luke xxiii. 35. the people stood gazing on him, in a most scorn-
ful manner, venting contemptuous and spiteful re-

proaches ; as we see reported in the evangelical SERM.
story. XXXII.

Thus did our blessed Saviour *endure the cross*, Heb. xii. 2. *despising the shame*. *Despising the shame*, that is, not simply disregarding it, or (with a stoical haughtiness, with a cynical immodesty, with a stupid carelessness) slighting it as no evil; but not eschewing it, or not rating it for so great an evil, that to decline it he would neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious designs.

There is innate to man an aversion and abhorrency from disgraceful abuse, no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain: whence *cruel mockings and scourgings* are coupled as ingredients of the sore persecutions sustained by God's faithful martyrs. And generally men with more readiness will embrace, with more contentedness will endure the cruelty of the latter, than of the former; pain not so smartly affecting the lower sense, as being insolently contemned doth grate upon the fancy, and wound even the mind itself. For, *the wounds of infamy do*, as the Wise Man telleth us, *go down into the innermost parts of the belly*, reaching the very heart, and touching the soul to the quick.

We therefore need not doubt, but that our Saviour as a man, endowed with human passions, was sensible of this natural evil; and that such indignities did add somewhat of loathsomeness to his cup of affliction; especially considering that his great charity disposed him to grieve, observing men to act so indecently, so unworthily, so unjustly toward him: yet in consideration of the glory that would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to us, of the *joy that was set before him*, when *he* Heb. xii. 2.

SERM. *should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied,*
XXXII. he most willingly did accept, and most gladly
 Isa. liii. 11. did comport with it. He *became a curse for us,*
 Gal. iii. 13.
 Heb. xii. 3. exposed to malediction and reviling; he *endured*
the contradiction, or obloquy, of sinful men: he
 Isa. liii. 3. *was despised, rejected, and disesteemed of men:* he
 in common apprehension was deserted by God,
 Isa. liii. 4. according to that of the prophet, *We did esteem*
him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; himself
 even seeming to concur in that opinion. So was he
 Gal. iii. 13. *made a curse for us,* that we, as the apostle teach-
 eth, might *be redeemed from the curse of the law:* that is, that we might be freed from the exemplary
 punishment due to our transgressions of the law,
 with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and
 the disgrace before the world attending it. He chose
 Phil. ii. 7. *thus to make himself of no reputation,* vouchsafing
 to be dealt with as a wretched slave, and a wicked
 miscreant, that we might be exempted, not only
 from the torment, but also from the ignominy which
 we had merited: that together with our life, our
 safety, our liberty, we might even recover that ho-
 nour which we had forfeited and embezzled.

But lest any should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferances of our Lord, as not so rare, but that other men have tasted the like; lest any should presume to compare them with afflictions incident to other persons, as Celsus did compare them
 Orig. c.
 Cels. vii. p.
 368. with those of Anaxarchus and Epictetus; it is requisite to consider some remarkable particulars about them.

We may then consider, that not only the infinite dignity of his person, and the perfect innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his sufferings; but

some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances adhering to his design, did much augment their force.

He was not only, according to the frame and temper of human nature, sensibly touched with the pain, the shame, the whole combination of disasters apparently waiting on his passion ; as God (when he did insert sense and passion into our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend we should be, and as other men in like circumstances would have been ; but in many respects beyond that ordinary rate : so that no man, we may suppose, could have felt such grief from them as he did, no man ever hath been sensible of any thing comparable to what he did endure ; that passage being truly applicable to him, *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger* ; as that unparalleled sweating out great lumps of blood Luke xxii. may argue ; and as the terms expressing his resentments do intimate. For, in respect of present evils, he said of himself, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful Matt. xxvi. to death* ; he is said *ἀδημονεῖν, to be in great anguish John xiii.* and anxiety, to be in *an agony or pang of sorrow. Mark xiv.* In regard to mischiefs which he saw coming on, he ^{33.} is said to be *disturbed in spirit*, and to be *sore amazed*, or dismayed at them. To such an exceeding height did the sense of incumbent evils, and the prospect of impendent calamities, the apprehension of his case, together with a reflection on our condition, screw up his affections.

And no wonder that such a burden, even the weight of all the sins (the numberless most heinous sins and abominations) that ever were committed by

SERM. mankind, by appropriation of them to himself, lying
XXXII. on his shoulders, he should feel it heavy, or seem to
crouch and groan under it; that in the mystical
Heb. x. 5. Psalm, applied by the apostle to him, he should cry
Psal. xl. 12. out, *Innumerable evils have compassed me about;*
mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I
am not able to look up; they are more than the
hairs of my head, and my heart faileth me. The
sight of God's indignation, so dreadfully flaming out
against sin, might well astonish and terrify him: to
stand, as it were, before the mouth of hell belching
fire and brimstone in his face; to lie down in the
hottest furnace of divine vengeance; to quench with
his own heart-blood the wrath of Heaven, and the
infernal fire, (as he did in regard to those who will
not rekindle them to themselves,) might well in the
heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpress-
ible pressures of affliction. When such a Father (so
infinitely good and kind to him, whom he so dearly
and perfectly loved) did hide his face from him, did
frown on him, how could he otherwise than be
mighty troubled? Is it strange that so hearty a
love, so tender a pity, contemplating our sinfulness,
and experimenting our wretchedness, should be
deeply touched? To see, I say, so plainly, to feel
so thoroughly the horrible blindness, the folly, the
infidelity, the imbecility, the ingratitude, the incor-
rigibility, the strange perverseness, perfidiousness,
malice, and cruelty of mankind in so many instances,
(in the treason of Judas, in the denial of Peter, in
the desertion of all the apostles, in the spite and
rage of the persecutors, in the falsehood of the wit-
nesses, in the abuses of the people, in the compliance
of Pilate, in a general conspiracy of friends and foes

to sin,) all these surrounding him, all invading him, SERM.
XXXII. all discharging themselves upon him; would it not _____ astone a mind so pure? would it not wound a heart so tender and full of charity?

Surely, any of those persons who fondly do pretend unto, or vainly do glory in, a sullen apathy, or a stubborn contempt of the evils incident to our nature and state, would in such a case have been utterly dejected: the most resolved philosopher would have been dashed into confusion at the sight, would have been crushed into desperation under the sense of those evils which did assault him.

With the greatness of the causes, the goodness of his constitution did conspire to increase his sufferings. For surely, as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, his affections most pliant and tractable; so accordingly would the impressions upon him be most sensible, and consequently the pains which he felt (in body or soul) most afflictive.

That we in like cases are not alike moved, that we do not tremble at the apprehensions of God's displeasure, that we are not affrighted with the sense of our sins, that we do not with sad horror resent our danger and our misery, doth arise from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of those matters; or that they do not in so clear and lively a manner strike our fancy; (not appearing in their true nature and proper shape, so heinous and so hideous as they really are in themselves and in their consequences;) or because we have but weak persuasions about them; or because we do but slightly consider them; or from that our hearts are very hard and callous, our affections very cold and

SERM. dull, so that nothing of this nature (nothing beside
XXXII. gross material affairs) can mollify or melt them; or
for that we have in us small love to God, and a
slender regard to our own welfare; in fine, for that
in spiritual matters we are neither so wise, so sober,
so serious, nor so good or ingenuous, in any reason-
able measure, as we should be. But our Saviour, in
all those respects, was otherwise disposed. He most
evidently discerned the wrath of God, the grievous-
ness of sin, the wretchedness of man, most truly,
most fully, most strongly represented to his mind:
he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew,
whatever God's law had declared about them: he
did exactly consider and weigh them: his heart was
most soft and sensible, his affections were most quick
and excitable by their due objects: he was full of
dutiful love to God, and most ardently desirous of
our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will
towards us. Whence it is not so marvellous that as
a man, as a transcendently wise and good man, he
was so vehemently affected by those occurrences,
that his imagination was so troubled, and his pas-
sions so stirred by them; so that he thence did suf-
fer in a manner and to a degree unconceivable; ac-
cording to that ejaculation in the Greek liturgies,
Διὰ τῶν ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, Χριστὲ,
*By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy
on us.* But further,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering
had in it some particular advantages, conduced to
the accomplishment of our Lord's principal designs.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent
time, were good advantages. For if he had been
privately made away, or suddenly despatched, no

uch great notice would have been taken of it, nor SERM. would the matter of fact have been so fully proved, ^{XXII.} to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction (his most divine patience, meekness, and charity) so illustriously shone forth. Wherefore, to prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, (together with other collateral good purposes,) divine Providence did so manage the business, that as the course of his life, so also the manner of his death, should be most conspicuously remarkable. *I spake freely to the world, and in secret* John xviii. ^{20.} *have I done nothing,* said he of himself; and, *These things,* said St. Paul to king Agrippa, *were* Acts xxvi. ^{26.} *not done in a corner.* Such were the proceedings of his life, not close or clandestine, but frank and open; not presently hushed up, but leisurely carried on in the face of the world, that men might have the advantage to observe and examine them. And as he lived, so he died, most publicly and visibly; the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and thence disposed to embrace his doctrine; according to what he did foretell, *I, being lifted up from the earth, shall* John xii. ^{32.} *draw all men to me:* for he drew all men, by so ^(Iren. ii.) obvious a death, to take notice of it; he drew all well-disposed persons, from the wondrous consequences of it, to believe on him. And, *As,* said he John iii. 14. again, *Moses did exalt the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted.* As the Iren. iv. 5. elevation of that mysterious serpent did render it visible, and did attract the eyes of people toward it; whereby, God's power invisibly accompanying that sacramental performance, they were cured of those

S E R M. mortiferous stings which they had received: so our
XXXII. Lord, being mounted on the cross, allured the eyes
of men to behold him, and their hearts to clese with
him; whereby, the heavenly virtue of God's Spirit
cooperating, they became saved from those destruc-
tive sins, which from the Devil's serpentine instiga-
tions they had incurred.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was,
that by it the nature of that kingdom, which he did
intend to erect, was evidently signified: that it was
not such as the carnal people did expect, an external,
earthly, temporal kingdom, consisting in domination
over the bodies and estates of men, dignified by out-
ward wealth and splendour, managed by worldly
power and policy, promoted by forcible compulsion
and terror of arms, affording the advantages of
safety, quiet, and prosperity here; but a kingdom
purely spiritual, celestial, eternal; consisting in the
governance of men's hearts and minds; adorned with
the endowments of wisdom and virtue; administered
by the conduct and grace of God's holy Spirit; up-
held and propagated by meek instruction, by virtuous
example, by hearty devotion, and humble pa-
tience; rewarding its loyal subjects with spiritual
joys and consolations now, with heavenly rest and
bliss hereafter. No other kingdom could he presume
to design, who submitted to this dolorous and dis-
graceful way of suffering; no other exploits could
he pretend to achieve by expiring on a cross; no
other way could he rule, who gave himself to be
managed by the will of his adversaries; no other
benefits would this forlorn case allow him to dis-
pense. So that well might he then assert, *My
kingdom is not of this world*; when he was going

in this signal way to demonstrate that important SERM.
truth. XXXII.

It was also a most convenient touchstone to prove Luke ii. 35. the genuine disposition and worth of men; so as to discriminate those wise, sober, ingenuous, sincere, generous souls, who could discern true goodness through so dark a cloud, who could love it though so ill-favouredly disfigured, who could embrace and avow it notwithstanding so terrible disadvantages; it served, I say, to distinguish those *blessed* ones, Matt. xi. 6. who *would not be offended in him*, or by the *scandal*^{Gal. v. 11.}_{1 Pet. ii. 7,} *of the cross* be discouraged from adhering to him,^{8.}_{1 Cor. i. 23.} from the crew of blind, vain, perverse, haughty people, who, being scandalized at his adversity, would contemn and reject him.

Another considerable advantage was this, that by Chrys. tom. vi. Orat. 61. it God's special providence was discovered, and his glory illustrated in the propagation of the gospel. For how could it be, that a person of so low parentage, of so mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent so lamentable and despicable a kind of death, falling under the pride and spite of his enemies, so easily should gain so general an opinion in the world (even among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons) of being the *Lord of life and glory*? How, I 1 Cor. ii. 8. say, could it happen, that such a miracle could be effected without God's aid and special concurrence? That king Herod, who from a long reign in flourishing state, with prosperous success in his enterprises, did attain the name of Great; or that Vespasian, who triumphantly did ascend the imperial throne, should either of them, by a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously be held, or in flattery be called the Messias, is not so strange: but that one who was

SERM. trampled on so miserably, and treated as a wretched
XXXII. caitiff, should instantly conquer innumerable hearts,
 and, from such a depth of extreme adversity, should
 be advanced to the sublimest pitch of glory ; that
Psal. cxviii. 22, 23. *the stone which the builders with so much scorn did
 refuse, should become the head-stone of the corner ; this* (with good assurance we may say) *was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*

2 Cor. iv. 7. 1 Cor. i. 27. Hereby indeed *the excellency of divine power* and wisdom was much glorified ; by so impotent, so improbable, so implausible means accomplishing so great effects ; subduing the world to obedience of God, not by the active valour of an illustrious hero, but through the patient submission of a poor, abused, and oppressed person ; restoring mankind to life and happiness by the sorrowful death of a crucified Saviour.

V. Lastly, the consideration of our Lord's suffering in this manner is very useful in application to our practice : no point is more fruitful of wholesome instruction, none is more forcible to kindle devout affections, none can afford more efficacious inducements and incentives to a pious life. For what virtue will not a serious meditation on the cross be apt to breed and to cherish ? To what duty will it not engage and excite us ?

1. Are we not hence infinitely obliged, with most humble affection and hearty gratitude, to adore each Person of the blessed Trinity ?

That God the Father should design such a re-
Rom. viii. 32. Col. i. 13. demption for us ; *not sparing his own Son, (the Son of his love,* dear to him as himself,) but *delivering him up for us,* to be thus dealt with for our sake : that God would endure to see his Son in so pitiful a

ondition, to hear him groaning under so grievous SERM.
ressures, to let him be so horribly abused ; and that XXXII.
or us, who deserved nothing from him, who had de-
merited so much against him ; for us, who were no
riends to him, (for *even when we were enemies, we* Rom. v. 10.
were reconciled to God by the death of his Son ;)
who were not any ways commendable for goodness
r righteousness : (for *Christ did suffer for sinners,* ^{1 Pet. iii.}
^{18.} *he just for the unjust ;* and *God commended his* Rom. v. 6.
we to us, that while we were sinful, Christ died ^{2 Cor. v. 19.}
^{Rom. v. 8.} *or us :)* that God thus should *love us, sending his* ^{1 John iv.}
^{10.} *son to be a propitiation for our sins,* in so dismal a
ray of suffering, how stupendous is that goodness !
ow vast an obligation doth it lay upon us to reci-
procal affection ! If we do owe all to God, as our
taker, from whose undeserved bounty we did receive
ll that we have ; how much further do we stand in-
ebted to him as the Author of our redemption, from
those ill-deserved mercy we receive a new being,
nd better state ; and that in a way far more obliging !
or God created us with a word, without more cost
r trouble : but to redeem us stood him in huge ex-
enses and pains ; no less than the debasing of his
nly Son to our frailty, the exposing him to more
han our misery, the withdrawing his face and re-
training his bowels from his best beloved. If a Jew
ben were commanded by law, if a Gentile were
bliged by nature, to *love God with all his heart*
nd all his soul ; what affection doth a Christian,
nder the law and duty of grace, owe unto him ? By
hat computation can we reckon that debt ? What
iculties have we sufficient to discharge it ? What
nite heart can hold an affection commensurate to
uch an obligation ?

S E R M. And how can it otherwise than inflame our heart
XXXII. with love toward the blessed Son of God, our Saviour,
Eph. iii. 19. to consider that, merely out of charitable pity toward
v. 2, 25.
Gal. ii. 20. us, he purposely came down from heaven, and took
Apoc. i. 5.
John xv.
13.
σωτήρ ΙΧΝ,
την τις—our flesh upon him, that he might therein undergo
those extreme acerbities of pain, and those most ugly
indignities of shame for us? *Greater love*, said he,
hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life
for his friends. But that God should lay down his
life, should pour forth his blood, should be aspersed
with the worst crimes, and clothed with foulest
shame, should be executed on a cross as a malefactor
and a slave, for his enemies and rebellious traitors,
what imagination can devise any expression of char-
ity or friendship comparable to this? Wherefore if
love naturally be productive of love, if friendship
justly meriteth a correspondence in good-will, what
effect should the consideration of so ineffable a love,
of so unparelleled friendship, have upon us?

How can any serious reflection on this event fail
to work hearty gratitude in us toward our good
Lord? For put case any person for our sake (that
he might rescue us from the greatest mischiefs, and
purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should
deprive himself of all his estate, (and that a very
large one,) of his honour, (and that a very high one,)
of his ease and pleasure, (and those the most perfect
and assured that could be;) that he should expose
himself to the greatest hazards, should endure the
sorest pains and most disgraceful ignominies; should
prostitute his life, and in most hideous manner lose
it, merely for our sake: should we not then appre-
hend and confess ourselves monstrously ingrateful,
if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if

upon all occasions we did not express our thankful- SERM.
ness for it ; if we did not ever readily yield all the XXXII.
acknowledgment and all the requital we were able ?
The case in regard to our blessed Saviour is like in
kind ; but in degree, whatever we can suppose doth
infinitely fall below the performances of him for us,
who stooped from the top of heaven, who laid aside
the majesty and the felicity of God, for the infamies
and the dolours of a cross, that he might redeem us
from the torments of hell, and instate us in the joys
of paradise. So that our obligations of gratitude to
him are unexpressibly great ; and we cannot with
any face deny ourselves to be most basely un-
worthy, if the effects in our heart and life be not
answerable.

Nor should we forget, that also upon this account
we do owe great love and thanks to God the Holy John iii. 34.
Ghost, who, as he did originally conspire in the won-
derful project of our redemption, as he did exe-
cutively by miraculous operation conduct our Saviour
into his fleshly tabernacle, as he did by unmeasur-
able communications of divine virtue assist his hu-
manity through all the course of his life ; so in this
juncture he did inspire him with charity more than
human, and did support him to undergo those pressures
with invincible patience ; and so did sanctify all this
sacerdotal performance, that our Lord, as the apostle
doth affirm, *did through the eternal Spirit offer* Heb. ix. 14.
himself without spot to God.

2. What surer ground can there be of faith in
God, what stronger encouragement of hope, than is
suggested by this consideration ? For if God stead- 1 Pet. i. 20.
fastly did hold his purpose, and faithfully did accom- Ephes. i. 4.
plish his word in an instance so distasteful to his Luke i. 70.

SERM. own heart and bowels; how can we ever suspect
XXXII. his constancy and fidelity in any case? how can
we distrust the completion of any divine promise?

Rom. viii. *If God spared not his own Son, but delivered*
32. *him up for us,* to the suffering of so contumelious
affliction; how can we any ways be diffident of his
bounty, or despair of his mercy? *how,* as the apostle
doth argue, *shall he not also with him freely give us*
all things?

If ever we be tempted to doubt of God's goodness,
will not this experiment thereof convince and satisfy
us? For what higher kindness could God express,
what lower condescension could he vouchsafe, by
what pledge could he more clearly or surely testify
his willingness and his delight to do us good, than
by thus ordering his dearest Son to undergo such
miseries for us?

Quis de se
desperet,
pro quo
tam humi-
lis esse vo-
luit Filius
Dei? Aug.
de Ag. Chr.
c. 11.
Gal. iii. 13. price is laid down to *redeem us from the curse,*
Ephes. v. 2.
1 Pet. i. 19. which richly may suffice to discharge it; that such a

sacrifice hath been offered, which God hath avowed
for most available, and acceptable to himself? So
that now what can justice exact more from us?
What have we further to do, than with a penitent
and thankful heart to embrace the mercy purchased

Rom. viii. for us? *Who is he that condemneth,* seeing *Christ*
34. *1 Pet. ii. 24. hath died,* and *hath his own self borne our sins in*
his own body on the tree? Whatever the wounds of
our conscience be, is not *the blood of the cross,* tem-
pered with our hearty repentance, and applied by a

lively faith, a sovereign balsam, of virtue sufficient to SERM.
stare them? And may we not by his stripes be healed? XXXII.
Have we not abundant reason, with the holy apostle, 1 Pet. ii. 24.
to joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by Rom. v. 11.
whom we have received the atonement? Is it not to
depreciate the worth, to disparage the efficacy of our
Lord's passion, any ways to despair of mercy, or to
be disconsolate for guilt; as if the cross were not
enough worthy to compensate for our unworthiness,
or our Saviour's patience could not balance our dis-
obedience?

8. It indeed may yield great joy and sprightly
consolation to us, to contemplate our Lord upon
the cross, exercising his immense charity toward us,
transacting all the work of our redemption, defeat-
ing all the enemies, and evacuating all the obstacles
of our salvation.

May we not delectably consider him as there Extendit
stretching forth his arms of kindness, with them to manus
embrace the world, and to receive all mankind under manus, &c.
the wings of his protection? as there spreading out Lact. iv. 26.
his hands, with them earnestly inviting and entreat- Isa. lxv. 2.
ing us to accept the overtures of grace, procured by
him for us?

Is it not sweet and satisfactory, to view our great Lev. ix. 22.
High Priest on that high altar offering up his own Chrys.
pure flesh, and pouring out his precious blood, as an Tom. 6.
universal, complete sacrifice, propitiatory for the sins 82.
of mankind?

Is it not a goodly object to behold humility and
patience so gloriously rearing themselves above all
worldly, all infernal pride and insolence; by the
cross ascending unto the celestial throne of dignity
and majesty superlative?

SERM. Is it not pleasant to contemplate our Lord there
XXXII. standing erect, not only as a resolute sufferer, but as
Col. ii. 15. a noble conqueror, where *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a solemn show, triumphing over them?* Did ever any conqueror, loftily seated in his triumphal chariot, yield a spectacle so gallant and magnificent? Was ever tree adorned with trophies so pompous and splendid?

To the exterior view and carnal sense of men, our Lord was then indeed exposed to scorn and shame; but to spiritual and sincere discerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up as objects of contempt, utterly overthrown and undone.

^{'Ο ιερεύς.}
Matt. xii.
^{29.}
Luke xi.
^{21, 22.}
Heb. ii. 14. There the Devil, that *strong and sturdy one*, did hang up bound in chains, disarmed and rifled, quite baffled and confounded, mankind being rescued from his tyrannic power.

Gal. vi. 14. There the world, with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its bewitching pleasures, its fondly admired excellencies, did hang up, all defaced and disparaged; as it appeared to St. Paul: for *God, saith he, forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.*

Gal. ii. 20.
^{v. 24.}
Col. iii. 5.
Rom. viii. 13. There, in a most lively representation, and most admirable pattern, was exhibited *the mortification of our flesh, with its affections and lusts*; and our *old man was crucified, that the body of sin might be destroyed.*

1 Pet. ii. 24. There our sins, being, as St. Peter telleth us, *carried up by him unto the gibbet*, did hang as marks of his victorious prowess, as malefactors by him *condemned in the flesh*, as objects of our horror and hatred.

There death itself hung gasping, with its sting SERM.
pulled out, and all its terrors quelled; his death XXXII.
having prevented ours, and induced immortality.

^{1 Cor. xv.}^{54, 55.}^{2 Tim. i. 10.}^{Heb. ii. 14.}^{Eph. ii. 15,}^{16.}^{Col. i. 20.}

There all wrath, *enmity*, strife, (the banes of comfortable life,) did hang *abolished in his flesh*, and *slain upon the cross*, by the blood whereof he made *peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth.*

There manifold yokes of bondage, instruments of vexation, and principles of variance, even all *the handwriting of ordinances that was against us*, did hang up, *cancelled and nailed to the cross.*

^{Col. ii. 14.}

So much sweet comfort by special consideration may be extracted from this event, which in appearance was most doleful, but in effect the most happy that ever by Providence was dispensed to the world. Further,

4. This consideration is most useful to render us very humble and sensible of our weakness, our vileness, our wretchedness. For how low was that our fall, from which we could not be raised without such a depression of God's only Son! How great is that impotency, which did need such a succour to relieve it! How abominable must be that iniquity, which might not be expiated without so costly a sacrifice! How deplorable is that misery, which could not be removed without commutation of so strange a suffering! Would the Son of God have so *emptied* and abased himself for nothing? <sup>'Everēdō lxi.
nōv. Phil. ii. 7.</sup> Would he have endured such pains and ignominies for a trifle? No, surely; if our guilt had been slight, if our case had been tolerable, the divine wisdom would have chosen a more cheap and easy remedy for us.

SERM. XXXII. Is it not madness for us to be conceited of any worth in ourselves, to confide in any merit of our works, to glory in any thing belonging to us, to fancy ourselves brave, fine, happy persons, worthy of great respect and esteem; wheras our unworthiness, our demerit, our forlorn estate did extort from the most gracious God a displeasure needing such a reconciliation, did impose upon the most glorious Son of God a necessity to undergo such a punishment in our behalf?

How can we reasonably pretend to any honour, or justly assume any regard to ourselves, wheras ^{1 Cor. ii. 8.} the firstborn of heaven, *the Lord of glory*, partaker ^{Phil. ii. 7.} of divine majesty, was fain to *make himself of no reputation*, to put himself into *the garb of a servant*, and, under the imputation of a malefactor, to bear such disgrace and infamy in our room, in lieu of the confusion due to us?

What more palpable confutation can there be of ^{2 Cor. x. 5.} human vanity and arrogance, of all lofty *imaginacions*, all presumptuous confidences, all turgid humours, all fond self-pleasings and self-admirings, than is that tragical cross, wherein, as in a glass, our foul deformity, our pitiful meanness, our helpless infirmity, our sad wofulness are so plainly represented.

Well surely may we say with St. Austin, *Let man now at length blush to be proud, for whom God is made so humble.* [And since, as he doth add, ^d*this*

^d *Jam tandem erubescat homo esse superbus, propter quem factus est humiliis Deus.* *Aug. in Ps. xviii.*

Iste ingens morbus omnipotentem Medicum de cœlo deduxit, usque ad formam servi humiliavit, contumeliis egit, ligno suspendit, ut per salutem tantæ medicinæ curetur hic tumor. *Ibid.*

*great disease of soul did bring down the almighty SERM.
Physician from heaven, did humble him to the form XXXII.
of a servant, did subject him to contumelies, did
suspend him on a cross, that this tumour by virtue
of so great a medicine might be cured;] may not
he well be presumed incurable, who is not cured of
his pride by this medicine; in whom neither the rea-
son of the case, nor the force of such an example,
can work humility?*

5. But further, while this contemplation doth breed sober humility, it also should preserve us from base abjectness of mind; for it doth evidently demonstrate, that, according to God's infallible judgment, we are very considerable; that our souls are capable of high regard; that it is a great pity we should be lost and abandoned to ruin. For surely, had not God much esteemed and respected us, he would not for our sakes have so debased himself, or deigned to endure so much for our recovery; divine justice would not have exacted or accepted such a ransom for our souls, had they been of little worth. We should not therefore slight ourselves, nor demean ourselves like sorry, contemptible wretches, as if we deserved no consideration, no pity from ourselves; as if we thought our souls not worth saving, which ^{Acts xiii.}^{46.} yet our Lord thought good to purchase at so dear a rate^c. By so despising or disregarding ourselves, do we not condemn the sentiments, do we not vilify

Quæ superbia sanari potest, si humilitate Filii Dei non sana-tur? *Aug. de Agone Chr. cap. xi.*

^c Aut vero pro minimo habet Deus hominem, propter quem mori voluit Filium suum? *Aug. in Psal. cxlviii.*

Si vobis ex terrena fragilitate viles estis, ex pretio vestro vos æstimate. *Aug.*

SERM. the sufferings of our Lord ; so with a pitiful meanness of spirit joining the most unworthy injustice and ingratitude ? Again,

6. How can we reflect upon this event without extreme displeasure against, and hearty detestation of our sins ? those sins which indeed did bring such tortures and such disgraces upon our blessed Redeemer ? Judas, the wretch who betrayed him ; the Jewish priests who did accuse and prosecute him ; the wicked rout which did abusively insult over him ; those cruel hands that smote him ; those pitiless hearts that scorned him ; those poisonous tongues that mocked him and reviled him ; all those who were the instruments and abettors of his affliction, how do we loathe and abhor them ! how do we detest their names and execrate their memories ! But how much greater reason have we to abominate our sins, which were the true, the principal actors of all that woful tragedy ! *He was delivered for our offences :* they were indeed the traitors,
Rom. iv. 25.
2 Cor. v. 21. which by the hands of Judas delivered him up. *He that knew no sin, was made sin for us :* that is, was accused, was condemned, was executed as a sinner for us. It was therefore we, who by our sins did impeach him ; the spiteful priests were but our advocates : we by them did adjudge and sentence him ; Pilate was but drawn in against his will and conscience to be our spokesman in that behalf : we by them did inflict that horrid punishment on him ; the Roman executioners were but our representatives therein. *He became a curse for us :* that is, all the mockery, derision, and contumely he endured, did proceed from us ; the silly people were but properties acting our parts. Our sins were they

that cried out, *Crucifice, (Crucify him, crucify him,) SERM.*
with clamours more loud and more importunate than XXXII.
did all the Jewish rabble ; it was they, which by the
borrowed throats of that base people did so outrage-
ously persecute him. *He was wounded for our Isa. liii. 5.*
transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities : it
was they, which by the hands of the fierce soldiers,
and of the rude populace, as by senseless engines, did
buffet and scourge him ; they by the nails and thorns
did pierce his flesh, and rend his sacred body. Upon
them, therefore, it is most just and fit that we should
turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indig-
nation.

7. And what in reason can be more powerful to-
ward working penitential sorrow and remorse, than
reflection upon such horrible effects, proceeding from
our sins ? How can we forbear earnestly to grieve,
considering ourselves by them to have been the per-
fidious betrayers, the unjust slanderers, the cruel
persecutors and barbarous murderers of a person so
innocent and lovely, so good and benign, so great
and glorious ; of God's own dear Son, of our best
friend, of our most gracious Redeemer ?

8. If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby
melt us into contrition ; yet surely this consideration
must needs affect us with a religious fear. For can *Psal. cxix.*
we otherwise than tremble to think upon the hein-
ous guilt of our sins, upon the dreadful fierceness of
God's wrath against them, upon the impartial seve-
rity of divine judgment for them, all so manifestly
discovered, all so livelily set forth in this dismal
spectacle ? If the view of an ordinary execution is
apt to beget in us some terror, some dread of the
law, some reverence toward authority ; what awful

SERM. impressions should this singular example of divine
XXXII. justice work upon us ?

How greatly we should be moved thereby, what affections it should raise in us, we may even learn from the most inanimate creatures : for the whole world did seem affected therat with horror and confusion ; the frame of things was discomposed and disturbed ; all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it. The sun (as from aversion and shame) did hide his face, leaving the world covered for three hours with mournful blackness ; the bowels of the earth did yearn and quake ; the rocks did split ; the veil of the temple was rent ; the graves did open themselves, and the dead bodies were roused up. And can we then (who are the most concerned in the event) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsy than interred carcasses, the most insensible and immovable things in nature ? But further,

9. How can the meditation on this event do otherwise than hugely deter us from all wilful disobedience and commission of sin ? For how thereby can we violate such engagements, and thwart such an example of obedience ? How thereby can we abuse so wonderful goodness, and disoblige so transcendent charity ? How thereby can we reject that gentle dominion over us, which our Redeemer

Tit. ii. 14.
1 Pet. i. 18,
19.
Rom. xiv. 9.
2 Cor. v. 15.
2 Pet. ii. 1.
1 Cor. vi.
20.
Heb. vi. 6.
Anno-
cūris.

did so dearly purchase, or renounce *the Lord that bought us* at so high a rate ? With what heart can we bring upon the stage, and act over that direful tragedy, renewing all that pain and all that disgrace to our Saviour : as the apostle teacheth that we do by apostasy, *crucifying to ourselves the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame* ? Can

ve without horror *tread under foot the Son of God, SERM. and count the blood of the covenant an unholy XXXII. thing*; (as the same divine apostle saith all wilful transgressors do;) vilifying that most sacred and precious blood, so freely shed for the demonstration of God's mercy, and ratification of his gracious intentions toward us, as a thing of no special worth or consideration; despising all his so kind and painful endeavours for our salvation; defeating his most charitable purposes and earnest desires for our welfare; rendering all his so bitter and loathsome sufferings in regard to us utterly vain and fruitless, yea indeed very hurtful and pernicious? For if the cross do not save us from our sins, it will much aggravate their guilt, and augment their punishment; bringing a severer condemnation and a sadder ruin on us. Again,

10. This consideration affordeth very strong engagements to the practice of charity towards our neighbour. For what heart can be so hard, that the blood of the cross cannot mollify into a charitable and compassionate sense? Can we forbear to love those, toward whom our Saviour did bear so tender affection, for whom he was pleased to sustain so woful tortures and indignities? Shall we not, in obedience to his most urgent commands, in conformity to his most notable example, in grateful return to him for his benefits, who thus did gladly suffer for us, discharge this most sweet and easy duty towards his beloved friends? Shall we not be willing, by parting with a little superfluous stuff for the relief of our poor brother, to requite and gratify him, who, to succour us in our distress, most bountifully did part with his wealth, with his glory, with his pleasure, 2Cor. viii.9.

SERM. with his life itself? Shall we not meekly comport
XXXII. with an infirmity, not bear a petty neglect, not forgive
Eph. iv. 32. a small injury to our brother, whenas our Lord did
Col. iii. 13. for us and from us bear a cross, to procure remission
for our innumerable most heinous affronts and of-
fences against Almighty God? Can a heart, void of
mercy and pity, with any reason or modesty pretend
to the mercies and compassions of the cross? Can
we hope that God for Christ's sake will pardon us, if
we for Christ's sake will not forgive our neighbour?

John xv. 12. Can we hear our Lord saying to us, *This is my command, that ye love one another, as I have loved*

John xiii. 35. *you; and, Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another?* Can we

Eph. v. 2. hear St. Paul exhorting, *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour;*

Rom. xv. 1, 3. *and, We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak—For even Christ pleased not himself, but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me?* Can we at-

1 John iv. 11. iii. 16. tend to St. John's arguing, *Beloved, if God so loved us, then ought we also to love one another. Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren?*

Can we, I say, consider such precepts, and such discourses, without effectually being disposed to comply with them for the sake of our crucified Saviour? all whose life was nothing else but one continual recommendation and enforcement of this duty; but his death especially was a pattern most obliging, most incentive thereto. This use of the point is the more to be regarded, because the apostle doth apply it

reto, our text coming in upon that occasion ; for SERM.
iving pathetically exhorted the Philippians to all XXXII.
nds of charity and humble condescension, he sub-
ineth, *Let this mind be in you, which was in Phil. ii. 5, 6.*
christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God, &c.

11. But furthermore, what can be more operative
an this point toward breeding a disregard of this
orld, with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous
lights ; toward reconciling our minds to the worst
ndition into which it can bring us ; toward support-
g our hearts under the heaviest pressures of afflic-
on which it can lay upon us ? For can we reason-
ly expect, can we eagerly affect, can we ardently
sire great prosperity, whenas the Son of God, our
ord and Master, did only taste such adversity ?
ow can we refuse, in submission to God's pleasure,
ntendedly to bear a slight grievance, whenas our
aviour gladly did bear a cross, infinitely more dis-
steful to carnal will and sense than any that can
fall us ? Who now can admire those splendid trifles,
hich our Lord never did regard in his life, and
hich at his death only did serve to mock and abuse
m ? Who can relish those sordid pleasures, of which
e living did not vouchsafe to taste, and the contra-
es whereof he dying chose to feel in all extremity ?
Who can disdain or despise a state of sorrow and
sgrace, which he, by voluntary susception of it,
ath so dignified and graced ; by which we so near Rom. viii.
semble and become conformable to him ; by which ^{17.}
e concur and partake with him ; yea, by which in Phil. iii. 10.
Apoc. i. 9.
1Pet. iv. 13.
ome cases we may promote, and after a sort com-
.ete his designs, *filling up*, as St. Paul speaketh, Col. i. 24.
at which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in
ur flesh ?

SERM. Who now can hugely prefer being esteemed, approved, favoured, commended by men, before infamy, reproach, derision, and persecution from them ; especially when these do follow conscientious adherence to righteousness ? Who can be very ambitious of worldly honour and repute, covetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who doth observe the Son of God choosing rather to hang upon a cross, than to sit upon a throne ; inviting the clamours of scorn and spite, rather than acclamations of blessing and praise ; divesting himself of all secular power, pomp, plenty, conveniences, and solaces ; embracing the garb of a slave, and the repute of a malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a prince, which were his due, which he most easily could have obtained^f ?

Can we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and prosperous in this world, to swim in affluence and pleasure ? Can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with some wants and straits here ; seeing the Fountain of all happiness did himself purposely condescend to so forlorn a state, and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer^g ? If with devout eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, besmeared all over with streams of his own blood, groaning under smart anguish of pain, encompassed with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding* (as it was foretold of him) *his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from shame and spitting* ; will not the imagination of such a

Isa. 1. 6.

^f Cogitemus crucem ejus, et divitias lutum esse putabimus. *Hier. ad Nepot. Epist. 2.*

^g Quis beatam vitam esse arbitretur in iis, quæ contemnenda esse docuit Filius Dei ? *Aug. de Ag. Chr. cap. xi.*

spectacle dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurS ^{SERM.} beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and XXXII. satisfactions, quash all that extravagant glee which we can find in any wild frolics or riotous merriments? Will it not stain all our pride, and check our wantonness? Will it not dispose our minds to be sober, placing our happiness in things of another nature, seeking our content in matters of higher importance; preferring obedience to the will of God before compliance with the fancies and desires of men; according to that precept of St. Peter, *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind—so as no longer to live the remaining time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God?*

12. This indeed will instruct and incline us cheerfully to submit unto God's will, and gladly to accept from his hand whatever he disposeth, however grievous and afflictive to our natural will; this point suggesting great commendation of afflictions, and strong consolation under them. For if such hardship was to our Lord himself a school of duty, *he*, as the apostle saith, *learning obedience from what he suffered*; ^{ἵμεθις ἀφ' οὐτοῦ.} ^{Heb. v. 8.} if it was to him a fit mean of perfection, as the apostle doth again imply when he saith, *that it became* ^{Heb. ii. 10.} *God to perfect the Captain of our salvation by suffering*; if it was an attractive of the divine favour even to him, as those words import, *Therefore the Father loveth me, because I lay down my life*; if it was to him a step toward glory, according to that saying, *Was not Christ to suffer, and so to enter into his glory?* yea, if it was a ground of conferring on him a sublime pitch of dignity above all creatures, *God for this obedience having exalted him, and* ^{Luke xxiv. 26.} ^{Phil. ii. 9.}

SERM. given him a name above all names; We seeing
XXXII. Jesus—for the suffering of death, crowned with
 Heb. ii. 9. glory and honour; the heavenly society in the Re-
 Rev. v. 12. velations with one voice crying out, *Worthy is the*
 9° *Lamb that was slain (who redeemed us to God by*
his blood) to receive power, and riches, and wisdom,
and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing:
 if affliction did minister such advantages to him;
 and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it,
 (with like equanimity, humility, and patience,) it
 may afford the like to us; what reason is there that
 we should anywise be discomposed at it, or disconso-
 late under it? Much greater reason, surely, there is,
 that, with St. Paul and all the holy apostles, we should

^a(Rom. v. ^brejoice, boast, and exult in our tribulations; far
 3. Col. i. 24. more cause we have, with them, to esteem it a favour,
 Matt. v. 12. Luke vi. 23. a privilege, an ornament, a felicity to us, than to be
 Phil. i. 29. displeased and discontented therewith.
 Acts v. 41.

Jam. i. 2. To do thus is a duty incumbent on us as Chris-
 Heb. x. 34. tians. For, ^bHe, saith our Master, *that doth not*
 1 Pet. i. 7. ^ctake up his cross, and follow me, is not worthy of
 Heb. xii. 2. ^dme: He that doth not carry his cross, and go after
 1 Cor. i. 4.) ^eme, cannot be my disciple. He that doth not will-
 1 Thess. iii. ^fingly take the cross, when it is presented to him by
 Rom. viii. ^gActs xiv. 22. God's hand; he that doth not contentedly bear it,
 3 Tim. iii. ^h2 Tim. iii. ⁱwhen it is by Providence imposed on him, is nowise
^jMatt. x. ^k38. xvi. 24. worthy of the honour to wait on Christ; he is not
 Luke xiv. ^l27. ix. 23. capable to be reckoned among the disciples of our
 Greg. Naz. ^mOrat. 38. p. heavenly Master. He is *not worthy of Christ*, as
 623. ⁿnot having the courage, the constancy, the sincerity
 of a Christian; or of one pretending to such great
 benefits, such high privileges, such excellent rewards,
 as Christ our Lord and Saviour doth propose. He
 cannot be *Christ's disciple*, shewing such an inca-

acity to learn those needful lessons of humility and SERM.
atiene, dictated by him; declaring such an indis- XXXII.
osition to transcribe those copies of submission to
be divine will, self-denial, and self-resignation, so
airly set him by the instruction and example of
Christ: for, *Christ, saith St. Peter, suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.*

*τον γεγένηται
ιν αληθεα.
νων.*
1 Pet. ii. 21.

13. The willing susception and the cheerful sus-
enance of the cross, is indeed the express condition,
nd the peculiar character of our Christianity; in
ignification whereof, it hath been from most ancient
imes a constant usage to mark those who enter into
t with the figure of it. The cross, as the instrument
y which our peace with God was wrought, as the
tage whereon our Lord did act the last part of his
narvellous obedience, consummating our redemp-
ion, as the field wherein the Captain of our salva-
τον σωτηρα.
ion did achieve his noble victories, and erect his
lorious trophies over all the enemies thereof, was
ell assumed to be the badge of our profession, the
sign of our spiritual warfare, the pledge of our
onstant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in re-
ation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our
reat joy and sole glory doth consist: for, *God for-*
id, saith St. Paul, that I should glory, save in the
ross of Christ.

τον στρατευον.
Const.
Apost. viii.
12.

SERM. sense or fancy,) that God should put his own most
XXXII. beloved Son into so very sad and despicable a condition ; that salvation from death and misery should
 be procured by so miserable a death ; that eternal
 joy, glory, and happiness should issue from these
 fountains of sorrow and shame ; that a person in
 external semblance devoted to so opprobrious usage,
 should be the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the
 King and Judge of all the world : let, I say, this
 doctrine be scandalous and distasteful to some per-
 sons tainted with prejudice ; let it be strange and
 incredible to others blinded with self-conceit ; let all
 the inconsiderate, all the proud, all the profane part
 of mankind openly with their mouth, or closely in
 heart, slight and reject it : yet to us it must appear

¹ Tim. i. 15. grateful and joyous ; to us it is *πιστὸς λόγος*, a *faith-*
² Tim. ii. *ful* and most credible *proposition worthy of all ac-*
ceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to
save sinners, in this way of suffering for them : to
 us, who discern by a clearer light, and are endowed
 with a purer sense, kindled by the divine Spirit ;
 from whence we may with comfortable satisfaction
 of mind apprehend and taste, that God could not in
 a higher measure, or fitter manner, illustrate his glo-
 rious attributes of goodness and justice, his infinite
 grace and mercy toward his poor creatures, his holy
 displeasure against wickedness, his impartial severity
 in punishing iniquity and impiety, or in vindicating
 his own sacred honour and authority, than by thus
 ordering his only Son, clothed with our nature, to
 suffer for us ; that also true virtue and goodness
 could not otherwise be taught, be exemplified, be
 commended and impressed with greater advantage.

Since thereby indeed a charity and humanity so

Orig. in
Cels. ii. p.
79.

unparalleled, (far transcending theirs who have been SERM. celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to XXXII.
 their country, or kindness to their friends,) a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical, were manifested for the instruction and direction of men ; since never were the vices and the vanities of the world (so prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) so remarkably discountenanced ; since never any suffering could pretend to so worthy and beneficial effects, the expiation of the whole world's sins, and reconciliation of mankind to God, the which no other performance, no other sacrifice did ever aim to procure ; since, in fine, no virtue had ever so glorious rewards, as sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, and eternal happiness to those that imitate it ; since, I say, there be such excellent uses and fruits of the cross borne by our Saviour ; we can have no reason to be offended at it, or ashamed of it; but with all reason heartily should approve and humbly adore the deep wisdom of God, together with all other his glorious attributes displayed therein. To whom therefore, as is most due, let us devoutly render all glory and praise. And,

*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Apoc. i. 5.
 sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and
 priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory
 and dominion for ever and ever. Blessing, and Apoc. v. 13.
 honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that
 sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for
 ever and ever. Amen.*

S E R M O N XXXIII.

OF DOING ALL IN THE NAME OF CHRIST.

Coloss. iii. 17.

And whatsoever ye do in word, or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

SERM. **WHATSOEVER ye do in word, or deed:** A XXXIII. duty we see the apostle enjoins us of a large extent, and therefore surely of a great importance; indeed of an universal concernment; such as must go along with, must run through all our words and all our actions. We are therefore much obliged, and much concerned to attend thereto, and to practise it carefully. But first we must understand what it is; the doing whereof depends upon understanding the sense of that phrase, (*doing in the name of Jesus*,) being somewhat ambiguous, and capable of divers meanings; which both in common use and in holy scripture we find it to bear, different according to the variety of matters or occasions to which it is applied; most of which are comprehended, and, as it were, complicated in that general one, according to which we may be said to do that in another person's name, which we do with any kind of reference or regard to him; such as our relations, or our obligations to that person do require; and the particular nature of the action doth admit. And according to this acception I conceive it safest and best to inter-

pret St. Paul's meaning here, supposing it to comprehend all the more special and restrained meanings of this phrase, truly applicable to the present matter; of which meanings I shall endeavour in order to propound the chief; and, together, both to unfold and to inculcate the several respective branches of this duty: yet first of all rejecting one or two, which cannot well be applied to this purpose.

To do in another's name, doth sometime denote the assuming another's person, or pretending to be the same with him, the very He. So, *many shall come in my name*, prophesied our Saviour, *saying, I am Christ*: to do thus in Jesus's name, is the part of an Antichrist and an impostor. That sense therefore hath nothing to do here.

Again; to do in another's name, doth often imply doing *alterius loco*, or *vice*; in another's name, or stead, as a deputy, or substitute; representing the person, or supplying the office of another. So did the prophets *come, and speak in God's name*; what they declared, or enjoined, being therefore said to be declared and enjoined by God himself; *I spake unto you, rising up early, and speaking*, (viz. by the prophets, whom he sent, and who are said to come and speak in his name.) And thus the apostles spake in Christ's name: *We are ambassadors for Christ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled.* Thus also princes govern, and magistrates execute justice in God's name; whence they are styled gods, as being his lieutenants, administering that judgment which belongs originally and principally to him. Now for this sense, neither is it so proper, or convenient here; it agreeing only to some

SERM. particular persons, and to some peculiar actions of
XXXIII. them ; insomuch that others presuming to act, according to that manner or kind, in Jesus's name, shall thereby become usurpers and deceivers. We (and to us all this precept is directed) shall heinously transgress our duty, doing any thing thus in his name, without his letters of credence; without being specially called or sent, or being duly by him authorized thereto.

These and such like senses the present matter doth not well admit : the rest that suit thereto I shall with some distinction in order represent.

Compare Mark ix. 41. I. To do in another's name sometime doth signify Matt. x. 41. to do it out of affection or honour to another ; for xxiv. 9. another's sake, because we love or esteem him ; & xix. 29. Matt. xviii. 5. τῷ ὀνόματι being equivalent to ἔνεκα τοῦ ὀνόματος, and διὰ τὸ ὄνομα. Thus it is said, *Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name ; because ye are Christ's,* (is added by way of interpretation, that is, out of respect to Christ, because of your relation to him,) *shall not lose his reward.* And thus surely we ought to do every thing in Jesus's name : all our actions ought to proceed from a principle of grateful love and reverence towards our gracious Redeemer. *Let all your actions be done in charity,*
^{1 Cor. xvi. 14.} saith the apostle ; if in charity to our neighbour, then much more in love to him, for whose sake we are especially bound to love our neighbour. Upon any undertaking, or applying ourselves to action, we should so reflect thereupon, as to consider, whether that we are going about be apt to please him, and conducible to his honour ; if so, remembering what he hath done and suffered for us, (what excellent blessings he hath purchased for us, what exceeding

benefits he hath conferred upon us,) we should, out **SERM.** XXXIII. of love and respect to him, readily perform it ; but if it otherwise appear displeasing or dishonourable to him, we should, from the same principles, carefully decline it. The duty is certain, and the reason thereof evident ; for inducement to the practice thereof, observe St. Paul's example ; who thus represents himself in the main employment of his life, acting, *The love of Christ constrains us ; judging* Φιλοτης *this, that he died for all, that they who live might* μετα απειρ *not live to themselves, but to him that died and rose* νιστη ^{2 Cor. v. 9,} *for them :* the love of Christ, begot and maintained ^{14.} 1 Thess. ii. 6. by a consideration of his great benefits conferred on him, was the spring that set St. Paul on work, that excited and urged him forward to action. Thus ^{14.} Tit. i. 11. ^{1 Pet. v. 2.} Phil. i. 15. ^{Matt. xxiii.} doing, we shall do in Jesus's name ; but if we act ^{5.} out of love to ourselves, (to promote our own interests, to gratify our own desires, to procure credit or praise to ourselves,) we act only in our own names, and for our own sakes ; not in the name, or for the sake of Jesus.

II. To do in another's name implies doing, chiefly, for the interest or advantage of another, upon another's behalf or account, as the servants or factors of another. For, when the business is another's, and the fruit or benefit emergent belong to another, he that prosecutes that business may well be, and is commonly, supposed to act in that other's name.

Thus our Saviour is in St. John's Gospel expressed John vii. 18. *to come, to speak, to act in God's name ; because* viii. 54. x. *he did God's business, (the work which God gave* 25. v. 43. *him to accomplish,) and entirely sought the glory* 36. vi. 28. *of God, as he there himself often avouches and professes. And thus, in imitation of him, ought we* ix. 3, 4.

SERM. also to do all things in his name ; remembering that
XXXIII. *we are not our own men, but the servants of Jesus,*

^{1 Cor. vi. 19. vii. 23.} *(servants to him not only by nature, as to our*
^{Heb. ix. 12.} *Maker and Preserver, but by purchase, as to our*
^{1 Pet. i. 18.} *Redeemer, who bought us with the greatest price;*
^{Rom. xiv. 8, 9.} *and by compact also, we having freely undertaken*

his service, and expecting wages from him,) that we have therefore no business or employment properly our own, but that all our business is (or should be)

^{1 Cor. x. 31.} *to serve him, and promote his glory ; Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of our Lord.* Whatever, I say, we do, we therefore should perform it with this formal reference, as it were, toward Jesus, as his servants, from conscience of the duty we owe to him ; with intention therein to serve him ; in expectation of reward only from him. So doth St. Paul (in prosecution of this same precept) beneath in this chapter

^{Col. iii. 23.} *enjoin us, that, whatever we do, we perform it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing*

^{24.} *(or considering) that from the Lord we shall receive the recompence of the inheritance ; for that we serve the Lord Christ.* In like manner other-

^{Eph. vi. 6. 9.} *where he teaches us to do what we do, not as pleasers of men, (not upon any inferior accounts,) but as servants of Christ, knowing and considering that we have a Master in heaven.* But,

III. Doing in another's name imports frequently doing by the appointment and command, or by the
^{Acts iv. 7.} commission and authority of another. 'Εν τοις δυνάμεις,
kai εν τοις ὀνόμασι ; By what power and in what name have ye done these things ? say the high priests to the apostles ; that is, who did appoint or authorize you to do thus ? Their answer was ready ; *In the*

name of Jesus, who had sent, commissionated, and SERM. commanded them to preach and propagate that doc- XXXIII.
trine. And thus we are also bound to do all things John v. 36,
in the name of Jesus, regulating all our actions by 37, 43. xiv.
his law; conforming our whole lives to his will ; 14. xvii. 18.
acting, not only out of good principles, (principles of Luke xxiv.
love and conscience,) but according to right rules ; 47.
^{2 Cor. v. 20.}
the rules of his word and example, which he hath
declared and prescribed to us : for what is done be-
side his warrant and will cannot be rightly esteemed
done in his name ; will not as so be avowed or ac-
cepted by him ; no unjust or impious action will he
upon any terms countenance or patronise. It was John xvi. 2.
once a famous saying, *All mischief begins in nomine
Domini* ; and much surely, more than one way, hath
been done under the like notion or pretence : but
this will not serve to excuse the doing of that, in the
day of final reckoning for our actions. For there Matt. vii.
will be many, we are taught, *that shall in that day,*
by specious professions of having done this or that
in Christ's name, veil their transgressions and their
neglects of duty, *saying, Lord, Lord, have we not in*
thy name prophesied, and in thy name cast out
devils, and in thy name done many wonderful
things? who yet, our Lord himself assures us, shall
have this reply made to them, *I never knew you* ; Luke xiii.
depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. There will
be those that shall claim acquaintance with Christ in
such terms : *Lord, we have eaten and drank before*
thee ; and thou hast taught in our streets ; whom
yet our Lord will disclaim with a, *Depart from me,*
all ye workers of iniquity. It is not, we see, pro-
phesying in Christ's name, (or preaching about him,) nor frequent attendance upon those who do so, nor

SERM. speaking much or hearing much concerning him ; it
XXXIII. is not having great gifts or endowments conferred by
Christ, (not even so great as that of working mira-
cles;) it is not familiar converse with Christ, or
making frequent addresses to him, that can sanctify
all a man's actions, or so entitle them to the name
of Christ, as to secure his person from being dis-
avowed and rejected by Christ; it is only the conform-
ing all our actions to his holy laws, that can assure
us to be acknowledged and accepted by him. This
I could wish they would consider, who seem, by such
pretences, to commend or excuse their actions, al-
though otherwise irregular and plainly contrary to
the laws of Christ; such as those of being meek and
charitable toward all men; living peaceably ourselves,
and endeavouring to promote peace among others;
abstaining from rash and hard censures, from re-
viling and defaming others; paying reverence and
obedience to superiors ; and the like laws of Christ,
not only express and manifest, but even of the high-
est rank and consequence among them; being mainly
conducing to that which our Lord especially tenders,
the public welfare and benefit of mankind; the vi-
olation whereof cannot be justified by pretending any
special regard whatever to Christ, or any collateral
performances done, whether truly or seemingly, in his
name. We do but deceive ourselves, if we conceit,
that, because we think much, or speak much of
Jesus, or have a zeal for something good, all our ac-
tions are done in his name : no, it only can be justly
impressed upon, can warrant and sanctify actions truly
good and agreeable to his law ; it were an abuse and
forgery to do it, like stamping the king's name or
image on counterfeit metal; upon brass or tin, in-

stead of gold or silver. Good intention and good SERM.
principles are indeed, as it were, the form and soul XXXIII.
of good actions ; but their being just and lawful are
the body and matter of them ; necessarily also con-
curring to their essence and integrity ; they cannot
subsist without it, but must pass, as it were, for ghosts
and shadows. We are therefore concerned in all our
doings to have an especial regard to Christ's law as
their rule ; that will render them capable of Christ's
name, and denominate them Christian

IV. Hereto we may add, that what we do in imitation of Jesus, and in conformity to his practice, (that living rule and copy proposed to us,) we may be said peculiarly to do in his name. As a picture useth to bear his name whom it was made to represent, and whom it resembles ; so if we set Christ's example before us, and endeavour to transcribe it ; if our life, in the principal lineaments of sanctity and goodness, do resemble his holy life ; they may well bear his name. But if our practice be unlike and unsuitable to his, we cannot affix his name thereto without great presumption and abuse ; such as would be committed, if to a draught of foul hue and ugly features, we should attribute the name of some most handsome and goodly person, of high worth and quality. To do thus in Jesus's name (with such a ^{Eph. v. 1, 2.}
^{1 Cor. x. 1.}
^{John xv.} regard to him) is a duty often prescribed to us, not ^{12, 13, 14.}
^{Heb. xii. 2.}
^{John xiii.} only as relating to some cases and actions, (as when ^{15.}
^{Phil. ii. 5.}
^{1 Pet. ii. 21.}
^{1 John ii. 6.} his charity, his patience, his humility, his meekness, are signally commended to our imitation,) but generally, *He that saith he abideth in him ought as he walked, so himself also to walk* ; that is, whoever professes himself a Christian ought to conform the whole tenor of his conversation to that of Jesus ; to

SERM. endeavour in every imitable perfection to resemble
XXXIII. him. So that whenever we undertake any action,
we should do well to look upon this pattern ; thus,
as it were, examining and inquiring of ourselves :
What did my Master in this or the like case ? Do
I do the same thing, do I act from the same prin-
ciples, do I proceed in the same manner as he did ?
Am I herein his disciple and follower ? If so, in his
name let me go on cheerfully ; if not, let me forbear.
Doing thus will not be only according to our duty,
but an especial help and furtherance of good practice.

V. To do in another's name doth sometimes im-
port doing by any power derived or virtue imparted
by another ; for that a thing so done may be imput-
ed, should be ascribed to that other. So, *Through*

^{'E, τῷ οὐ-}
^{μεν. LXX.}
Psal. xliv.
g. lxxxix.
24.
Matt. vii.
22.
Mark ix. 38.
Acts iii. 6.
iv. 10, 30.
John xvii.
11.

thee, saith the Psalmist, *will we push down our ene-*
mies ; in thy name will we throw down those that
hate us : (*through thee and in thy name* signify
the same thing.) So did the apostles cast out devils,
and perform their other miracles, in Jesus's name,
(*διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος, by his name*, it is sometime ex-
pressed,) that is, by a divine virtue imparted from him.

To this I add another acception, scarce different (at
least as to our purpose) from that, according to
which doing in another's name signifies doing it in
trust, or confidence reposed upon another, with ex-
pectation of aid, or hope of good success from an-
other. So, *We rest on thee*, said good king *Aса*,
and in thy name we go against this multitude ; in
thy name, that is, hoping for assistance and success

^{1 Sam. xvii. 45.} from thee. And thus it is said, that *David went*
out against Goliath in the name of the Lord of
hosts ; that is, confiding in God's help, as his only
weapon and defence : thus also did the holy apostles

work their miracles in Jesus's name, ἐν τῷ ονόματι τοῦ SERM.
σάπατος αὐτοῦ, by faith in his name, saith St. Peter, XXXIII.
his name hath made this man strong; that is, we Acts iii. 16.
did only trust in his divine power, and it was that
power of his which restored that weak person to his
strength. And thus also is it our duty to do all things
in our Saviour's name; with faith and hope in him;
wholly relying upon him for direction and assistance;
expecting from him only a blessing and happy
issue of our undertakings. What we do in confi-
dence of our wisdom or ability, or in affiance upon
the help of any other person or thing, we do in our
own name, or in the name of that thing (or that per-
son) in whom we so confide; to ourselves, or to such
auxiliaries, we shall be ready to attribute the suc-
cess, and to render the glory of the performance;
glorying in our own arm, and sacrificing to our Hab. i. 16.
self. But what we undertake only depending upon
our Lord for ability and success, may therefore bear
his name, because our faith derives the power from
him, which enables us happily to perform it; so that
the performance may truly be attributed to him,
and to him we shall be apt to ascribe it. And
thus, I say, we are certainly obliged to do every
thing in his name, (in his name alone,) retaining a
constant sense both of our own infirmity, and of the
impotency of all other created things, and conse-
quently a total diffidence both in ourselves and in
them; but reposing all our trust in the direction
and assistance of our all-wise and almighty Lord; of
Jesus, to *whom all power in heaven and earth is* Mat. xxviii.
given, (who indeed had it originally by nature as 18.
John iii. 35.
God; but also further hath acquired it by desert xiii. 3. xvii.
and purchase;) into whose hands all things are Heb. i. 2.
ii. 8.

S E R M. given ; and all things are put under his feet ; who
XXXIII. hath obtained this power in design to use it for our
Eph. i. 22. good ; and is thereby always ready to help us in our
¹ Cor. xv. need, if we have recourse unto him, and rely upon
^{27.} Phil. ii. 9.
Apoc. v. 12. him ; making him what St. Paul styles him, *our*
¹ Tim. i. 1. *hope* ; our only hope ; renouncing all other confi-
dences not subordinate to him. To do so is a duty
evidently grounded as well upon the reason of the
thing, as upon the will and command of God ; to do
otherwise is no less a palpable folly, than a manifest
injury to God. For, in truth, neither have we nor
any other created thing any power, other than such
as he is pleased freely to dispense^h; and which is not
continually both for its being and its efficacy subject to
him, so that he may at his pleasure subtract it, or ob-
struct its effect : *No king is saved by the multitude*
of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much
strength; a horse is a vain thing for safety: whence it is plain that we cannot upon any created
power ground a solid assurance of success in any un-
I s a. xxxiv. dertakingⁱ ; it will be *leaning upon a broken reed,*
^{6.} (which cannot support us, and will pierce our hands,) both a vain and a mischievous confidence ; that will abuse us, bringing both disappointment and guilt upon us ; the guilt of wronging our Lord many ways, by arrogating to ourselves, or assigning to others, what he only doth truly deserve, and what peculiarly of right belongs to him : withdrawing the same from him ; implying him unable or unwilling to assist us,

^h The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Eccl. ix. 11. By strength shall no man prevail. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Psal. xxxiii. 17. cxlv. 3. xliv. 3.

ⁱ Isa. xliii. 11. Beside me there is no Saviour. Hos. xiii. 4. 10. Psal. cxi. 21. Jer. xiv. 8.

and do us good ; neglecting to use that strength SERM.
which he so dearly purchased and so graciously ten- XXXIII.
ders ; so disappointing him, and defeating, as it were,
his purposes of favour and mercy towards us. On
the other side, trusting only upon our Saviour, we
act wisely and justly, gratefully and officiously ; for
that, in doing so, we build our hopes upon most sure
grounds ; upon a wisdom that cannot be deceived ;
upon a strength that cannot be withheld ; upon a
goodness that hath no limits ; upon a fidelity that
can never fail. For that we act with an humility
and sobriety of mind suitable to our condition, and
to the reason of things ; for that we thereby declare
our good opinion of him, as only able, and very will-
ing to do us good ; for that we render him his just
honour and due ; we comply with his earnest desires,
we promote his gracious designs of mercy and kind-
ness toward us. Hence is it that every where in Psal. cxlvii.
holy scripture God so highly commends, so greatly 5. xl. 4.
encourages this duty of trusting alone in him ; that xlv. 6.
he so ill resents, and so strongly deters from the xxxiii. 18.
breach or omission thereof : *Thus saith the Lord,* cxxv. 1.
Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and lxi. 4. xcii.
maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth 4. cxviii. 8.
from the Lord : for he shall be like the heath in lxxviii. 22.
the desert, and shall not see when good cometh ; lxvi. 2.
but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilder- Jer. xiv. 8.
ness, in a salt land, and not inhabited. Blessed is xvii. 5, 6.
the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope
the Lord is : for he shall be as a tree planted by
the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the
river, and shall not see when heat cometh ; but her
leaf shall be green ; and shall not be careful in
the year of drought, neither shall cease from yield-

SERM. *ing fruit*: thus in that place, thus in innumerable
XXXIII. others we are threatened not only with disappointment and bad success in our undertakings, but with severe punishment, if we betake ourselves to other succours, and neglect or distrust, or, in so doing, desert God; but are encouraged, not only with assurance of prosperous success, but of additional rewards, if entirely in our proceedings we depend upon and adhere to God. Thus we should do in all, even our most common and ordinary affairs, which no less than the rest are subject to his power, and governed by his care. For you know how St. James doth reprehend it as a piece of naughty boasting and

Matt. x. 29, arrogance, to say, *The morrow we will go to this*
^{30.} *city, and stay there a year, and trade and gain*:

instead of saying, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that; that is, to resolve upon, undertake, or prosecute any affair, without submission to God's will, and dependence on his providence: but especially we ought, in matters and actions more spiritual, to practise this duty; for that to the performing of these we have of ourselves a peculiar impotence and unfitness; needing therefore a more especial assistance from our Lord; that the success of them more particularly depends upon him; that the glory of them in an especial manner is appropriate, and, as it were, consecrate to him.

If it be a folly and a crime to think we can do any thing without God, it is much more so to think we can do any thing good without him; it is an arrogance, it is an idolatry, it is a sacrilege much more vain and wicked to do so^k. To imagine that we can,

^k Οὐτε γὰρ ἀνθράπινός τι ἀνευ τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ θεῖα συναγωφοῦ, εὐ πράξει.
 Act. iii. 13.

y the force of our own reason and resolution, achieve SERM.
ny of those most high and hard enterprises, to which XXXIII.
y the rules of virtue and piety we are engaged; that
e can, by our own conduct and prowess, encounter
nd withstand, defeat and vanquish those so crafty, so
ighty enemies of our salvation, (our own fleshly de-
res, the menaces and allurements of the world, the
ights and powers of darkness,) is much a worse
resumption, than in other affairs of greatest diffi-
ulty to expect success without the divine assistance
nd blessing, than in other most dangerous battles to
ink we can, *by our own bow and by our own spear*, Ps. xliv. 6.
zve ourselves; that we can obtain victory other-
ise than from his hand and disposal, who is the
ord of hosts. Reason tells us, and experience also
news, and our Saviour hath expressly said it, *That* John xv. 5.
n these things) without him (without his especial
fluence and blessing) *we can do nothing*; he tells
s, that we are but branches, inserted into him; so
hat, without continually drawing sap from him, we
an have no life or vigour spiritual. The wisest and
est of men have, by their practice, taught us to ac-
knowledge so much; to depend wholly upon him,
> ascribe all to him in this kind. *Why*, say St. Acts iii. 12,
Peter and St. John, *do ye wonder at this? or why*
aze ye upon us, as if by our own power, or piety,
re had made this man walk?—*His name*, (the
ame of Jesus,) *through faith in his name, hath*
made this man strong: that acknowledgment in-
eed concerns a miraculous work; but spiritual
works are in reality no less, they requiring as much
r more of virtue supernatural, or the present inter-
osition of God's hand to effect them; they make
ess show without, but need as great efficacy within:

SERM. so our Saviour, it seems, did imply, when he said,
XXXIII. *He that believes in me, the works that I do he*
John xiv. *shall do, and greater works than these.* Every good
^{12.} and faithful man doth not work miracles; yet some-
 what greater, it seems, by the grace of Christ, *he per-*
forms: however, to these St. Paul referred, when
Phil. iv. 13. he affirmed, *I can do all things in Christ that*
strengtheneth me; nothing was so hard that he
 feared to attempt, that he despaired to master and
^{2 Cor. iii. 5.} go through with by the help of Christ; and, *Not,*
 saith he again, *that we are sufficient of ourselves to*
think any thing of ourselves; but our sufficiency is
of God: he was as sensible of his own inability, as
 he was confident in the gracious help of Christ. Thus
 should we do all things in the name of Jesus; and it
 is not only a duty to do it, but it may be a great
 encouragement to us, that we are capable of doing
 it; a great comfort to consider, that in all honest
 undertakings we have so ready and so sure an aid to
 second and further us in them; confiding in which,

^{οὐδὲ, ἀδύνα-} nothing is so difficult, but we may easily accomplish;
^{τίσις ἡρακ.}
Matt. xvii. (*a grain of faith will be able to remove mountains;*)
^{20. xxi. 21.}
Luke xvii. nothing is so hazardous, but we may safely venture
^{6.}
Matt. xiv. on; (*walking on the sea, treading upon serpents*
^{29.}
Luke x. 19. *and scorpions, daring all the power of the enemy.*)

In his name we may, if our duty or good reason calls
 us forth, how small and weak soever, how destitute
 soever of defensive arms, or weapons offensive, naked
 and unarmed, with a sling and a stone, go out
 against the biggest and best armed Philistine, nothing
 doubting of victory: our weakness itself, if we be
 humbly conscious and sensible thereof, will be an ad-
 vantage to us, as it was to St. Paul; to all effects and
^{2 Cor. xii. 9.} purposes, *the grace of our Lord will be sufficient*

for us, if we apply it, and trust therein. But SERM.
further, XXXIII.

VI. To do in another's name may denote, to do it with such regard to another, that we acknowledge (that, I say, we heartily and thankfully acknowledge) our hope of prospering in what we do; our expectation of acceptance, favour, or reward to be grounded on him; that they are procured by his merits and means, are bestowed only for his sake. Thus our Saviour bids us to *offer our prayers in his name*; John xiv. that is, representing unto God his meritorious per-^{13. xv. 16.}_{xvi. 23, 24.} formances in our behalf, as the ground of our access to God, of our hope to obtain from him what we request. So also we are enjoined to *give thanks in his name*; Eph. v. 20. _{iii. 21.} that is, with persuasion and acknowledgment, that only in respect to him we become capable to receive or enjoy any good thing; that, in effect, all the blessings by divine mercy vouchsafed us have been procured by him for us, are through him conveyed unto us. And thus also we should do all things in the name of Jesus, offering all our deeds to God, as sacrifices and services unworthy of acceptance, both in themselves, and as proceeding from us; but pleasing and acceptable to God only for his sake. We should do well, upon all occasions, to remember our natural condition, and the general state of mankind; such as it was before he did undertake, such as it would have continued still, had he not undertaken for it; that our race had forfeited and was fallen from God's favour; having injured him beyond all power of making him any reparation or satisfaction; that thence it was secluded from all means and hopes apparent of happiness, was exposed and tended downright unto misery; that we consequently had no ground to hope that God (from whom, no

SERM. less in mind and in deed, than by reason of our guilt
XXXIII. and state of condemnation, we were estranged) would, in kindness, bestow any good upon us, or from us accept favourably any thing we should do. But that, by our Saviour's performances, the case is altered; he, by his entire obedience, having so pleased God, by his patient submission to God's will, having so appeased his anger and satisfied his justice, that God is not only reconciled, but hath an especial favour, bears an earnest good-will toward us. That

Acts iii. 26. now the good things we possess, we may truly esteem
 Eph. ii. 17.
 iii. 12.
 'E, w̄sru-
 b̄sru.
 Eph. i. 6.

now the good things we possess, we may truly esteem as blessings, and enjoy them with real comfort, as proceeding from mercy and kindness; now what we honestly endeavour, we may hope shall please God; now we have a free access to God, and may cheerfully present our sacrifices of duty and devotion, with a full persuasion that they shall be accepted. But all this happiness, all these favours and privileges, we must always remember to come from the continued procurement and mediation of the Beloved; so as ever to be ready to acknowledge it, and to return our thanks therefore. To this sense that our apostle here had an especial regard, the words immediately following imply—*Doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*; that is, in all things we do, taking occasion to render thanks to God, as for his sake being merciful and bountiful to us; bestowing upon us the good we enjoy, blessing our endeavours, accepting our performances. We must not conceit, that any regard, any mercy, any favour, any reward is due to us in equity, is in effect conferred upon us, upon our own personal score; (for, how mean things are we in comparison of his greatness; how vile and filthy things must we appear to his

most pure and all-discerning eyes ; how unworthy SERM. of his regard and of his affection must we needs take XXXIII. ourselves to be, if we do but well consider, and are acquainted with ourselves !) but that *in him* (i. e. for his sake, and by his means) *God hath blessed* Eph. i. 3, 6. *us with all spiritual blessings*, in him ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς, *God hath favoured*, and cast his grace upon us ; valuing us notwithstanding all our imperfections ; loving us, notwithstanding all the spots with which we are defiled ; notwithstanding all the offences we have committed ; for the relation and alliance we have to Jesus. Nor must we look on our services (the best we are able to perform) as in themselves grateful or satisfactory : for all of them, if we mark them well, we shall find not only quite *unprofitable to God*, but very defective in many respects ; for, who can say, he performs any thing both in kind, in manner, in degree thoroughly right and good ; with that ardency of love he owes to God, with that purity of intention, with that earnest vigour of spirit, with that undistractedness of mind, with which he should perform it ? No ; in all our flock we cannot pick out a sacrifice entire and unblemished ; such as God requires, such as duty exacts of us. They need therefore (all our services need) to be commended and completed by the beloved Son's perfectly well-pleasing performances ; Heb. vii. 26. they need to be cleansed and hallowed, by passing through the hands of our most holy and undefiled High Priest ; to become sweet and savoury (or to receive that ὁσμὴ εὐωδίας, which St. Paul speaks of) Eph. v. 2. Rev. viii. from being offered up *in his censer*. In fine, as all 3, 5. our actions should, in our intention, be works of religion dedicated to God's service and honour ; sacri-

SERM. fices, as it were, of gratitude and homage to God; XXXIII. so they ought all to be offered up in the name of Jesus. I add further,

VII. Lastly, that to do in the name of Jesus may well imply doing with invocation of him: thus we may understand that place of St. James, where the ^{James. v. 14.} elders are advised to *pray, and anoint the sick in the Lord's name*, for, to anoint them, imploring our Lord's blessing upon them, and upon those means used for their cure. And thus St. Chrysostom¹ expounds the words; do all in Jesus's name, *that is*, saith he, *imploring him for your helper in all things; always first praying to him, undertake your business.* Doing thus, will indeed christen ^{1 Tim. iv. 5.} and consecrate our actions; for *all things*, saith our apostle, *are sanctified by the word of God, and prayer*; that is, by God's blessing implored, and obtained by prayer; or, if God's word be there taken for his law, or revealed will, it is there signified, that our actions are not only sanctified by their lawfulness, or conformity to that good rule, God's declared will; but also by the invocation of his name; however, all our actions, it seems, are unhallowed and profane, if not accompanied with devotion^{m.}

^{1 Thess. v. 17.} That to do thus is our duty, appears by ^{Luke xviii.} those frequent injunctions, to *pray indesinently*, to ^{1.} ^{Rom. xii. 12.} *pray always, to abide instantly in prayer*; which

^{Col. iv. 2.} ¹ In locum. Αὐτὸν καλῶν βοηθὸν, ἐπὶ πάντων πρότερον αὐτῷ εὐχόμενος, ἀπει τῶν πραγμάτων.

^m Δεῖ πάσης τῆς πράξεως προηγεῖσθαι τὴν προσευχήν. M. Erem.

Μηδὲν μήτε ποιῶμεν μήτε λέγωμεν πρὶν ἡ τὸν θεὸν καλέσαι καὶ παρακαλέσαι συνεφάψασθαι τῶν ἐν χερσὶν ἥμιν ἀπάντων. Chrys.

Τοῦτο δίγε πάντες ὅσοι καὶ κατὰ βραχὺ σωφροσύνης μετέχουσιν ἐπὶ πάσῃ ὄρμῃ καὶ σμικροῦ καὶ μεγάλου πράγματος θεὸν ἀεὶ του καλοῦσιν. Plato Tim. Vid. Epist. 8. Arr. Epict. II. 18.

do not only import, that we should pray often, and SERM. continue with patience and earnestness in prayer; XXXIII. but that we should annex it to, or interpose it among, all our actions, undertaking nothing (at least of consideration or moment) without it. We should do it (our Saviour commands) ἐν παντὶ καρπῷ, Luke xi. 36. that is, *on every occasion*: and St. Paul gives the same direction; *Praying*, says he, ἐν παντὶ καρπῷ, *on* Eph. vi. 18. *all opportunities, with all prayer and supplication in spirit*; (in spirit, that is, I take it, *in our hearts* Eph. v. 19. at least, and with secret elevations of our mind, if ^{'Εν παντὶ.} not with our mouth and voice.) And more explicitly otherwhere saith he, *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing (in all your affairs) by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God*ⁿ. And thus to do (to accompany all our undertakings with prayer) we are indeed concerned upon many accounts. We Job xviii. 7. Isa. xxx. 1. Hos. x. 6. Prov. i. 25. need God's direction (being ourselves very blind and ignorant) in the choice of what we attempt; that 30. our ends and designs may be good, conducible to Psal. cxi. 13. xvi. 7. God's honour and our own true advantage. For, as lxxiii. 24. cvii. 11. Jer. x. 23. Prov. xx. 24. xvi. 9. the prophet tells us, *The way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man that walketh to direct his steps*; and, as the Wise Man adds, *Man's goings are of the Lord; how then can a man understand his own way?* (implying, since God only knows what is best for us, that we of ourselves, without his direction, know not what to do, whither to go.) The holy Psalmist signifies the same in those words,

ⁿ Bene ac sapienter majores instituerunt, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium a precationibus caperetur; quod nihil rite, nihilque providenter homines sine Deorum immortalium ope, consilio, honore auspicarentur. *Plin. in Paneg.*

SERM. (very encouraging to the practice of this duty,) XXXIII. *What man is he that feareth the Lord?* (that

Psal. xxv. feareth him, that is, who worshippeth him, and
^{12, 9.} seeketh his guidance,) *him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.* We need also (being

ourselves not only weak and infirm, but inconstant and unstable) God's assistance and upholding hand in the pursuance of our well-chosen designs, (that we may use the best means, and proceed in a straight course; that we may persist upright and steady in our proceedings,) that which the Wise Man seems to call, the establishing of our thoughts, and promises, as a consequence, upon our seeking God's assistance in our actions, and relying thereon;

Prov. xvi. 3. *Commit, saith he, thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established;* (thou shalt drive on thy good purposes steadily, without stumbling or falling; at least irrecoverably.) So the Psalmist

Ps. xxxvii. assures us concerning a good man; *The steps of a 23, 24, 31. good man are ordered by the Lord; none of his steps shall slide: though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* We also further, as to the final success of our affairs, stand in need of God's blessing; that he, upon whose will altogether depends the disposal of all events, should bestow a good issue unto our endeavours, that they prove not matter of discouragement or discomfort to us; that which also the Psalmist assures us of obtaining, upon condition of our imploring and depending upon God for it;

Psal. xxxvii. 5. cxix. 5. *Commit thy way, saith he, unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* We do thus need in all our affairs the direction, assistance, and blessing of our Lord; but shall not have them

thout prayer; for the rule is, *Ask and have, seek SERM.
d find.* Without asking, we are not likely to ob-

XXXIII.

n those gifts; without seeking, we must not hope ^{Luke xi. 9.}
find those benefits from God. If we are so proud ^{10.}
to think we do not need them, or so negligent as ^{13.}
t to mind them, or so distrustful of the divine
wer or goodness, that we imagine he cannot or
ll not afford them to us, we are like to be so un-
ppy as to want them. God expects from us, that
e should, in whatever we do, acknowledge him:
is the Wise Man's expression, *In all thy ways* ^{Prov. iii. 6.}
knowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths:)
knowledge him as the only faithful guide and
unsellor; as the only sufficient helper and pro-
ctor; as the only free arbitrator and donor of good
cess. Nothing therefore is well done, which is
t thus done: we cannot be satisfied in what we
; we cannot hope for a comfortable end thereof;
e cannot expect a blessing from God, if we have
fused, or if we have neglected the recommending
r proceedings to his care. We can, I say, do no-
ing; not eat, not sleep, not trade, not travel, not
udy with any true content, any reasonable security,
y satisfactory hope, if we have not first humbly
iplored God's favour; committing ourselves and
r business into his hand, that hand which dis-
nseth all good, which alone can keep off all danger
nd mischief from us. *God shall send his angel* ^{Gen. xxiv. 7.}
fore thee: so did our father Abraham send his
rvant about his business; having questionless be-
re commended it to God by prayer. *God Al-* ^{Gen. xlvi.}
ightly give you mercy before the man: so did ^{14.}
icob give his sons their despatches toward Egypt,
such a manner did we enter upon all our affairs,

SER.M. we could not but be full of hope, and void of care
XXXIII. concerning them; for that commonly we are so full
of anxiety about the event of what we undertake, whence doth it arise, but from our neglect of this
duty? for, having committed our business into so
sure a hand, how could we further be solicitous
about it? Had we, according to St. Peter's advice,

¹ Pet. v. 7. *cast our care upon the Lord;* or, *cast our burden*
^{Psal. lv. 22.} *upon him,* (as the Psalmist exhorts us;) had we duly

^{Psal. ix. 10.} sought and invoked him, who *never faileth them*
^{Old Transl.} *that seek him, who is nigh to all them that call*

^{Ixx. 4.}

^{Psal. cxlv. 18.} *upon him;* we should not have such a load of trou-
blesome care resting upon us; our hearts would be
light and free as to all these things; we should be
secure, that nothing very bad or disastrous could
befall us; we should experience it true, what the
prophet affirms in that prayer or psalm to God;

^{Isa. xxvi. 3.} *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind*
^{Phil. iv. 6.} *is stayed on thee. Be careful for nothing,* St. Paul
bids us; *but in every thing let your requests be*

made known to God: if we perform the latter part,
the former will naturally be consequent thereon.
Thus, in the last place, should we do all things in
the name of Jesus, (upon all occasions praying to
him, or, which is all one, to God in his name,) which
that we may do (that we are allowed and encou-
raged to do it) is also a privilege, and an advantage
unvaluable.

In so many ways and particular respects may we
and ought we to perform all we do in the name of
Jesus: we should do every thing out of grateful
affection and respect to him, as our chief principle;
every thing as his servants, aiming especially at the
pleasing of him and promoting his honour, as our

principal end; every thing according to his will and SERM. commandment, as our constant rule; every thing XXXIII. after his example, as our best pattern; every thing in confidence of his gracious assistance and blessing, as our only strength and support; every thing with hope of acceptance purely upon his account; every thing with thankful sense and acknowledgment to God for the mercies and favours conveyed unto us by his means, conferred upon us for his sake; every thing with humble invocation of him, or with prayer to God in his name: in sum, every thing with a due and proper regard had to him; so that he be not passed over or left out in any thing we undertake; but come always into consideration, according as our relations to him and our obligations to him do require. In the performances of which duties the life indeed of our religion (of all our good practice, of all our devotion) doth consist.

To all this I shall only subjoin the mention of one general duty, implied in all and each of those we have propounded, which is this:

VIII. That our Lord Jesus should be frequently (and in a manner continually; always, as to the habitual disposition of our souls, actually upon all fit occasions) present to our minds and thoughts.. This, I say, is plainly implied in the former duties. For, how is it possible we should perform all our actions (yea, utter all our words) with any sort of regard to him, if we seldom think of him? Such is the nimbleness and activity of our minds, that it is feasible enough to do thus; and, in respect to other objects, we commonly experience it done; for *animus est ubi amat*; whatever we affect, our mind, however otherwise employed, will be thinking on it; it is hard to

SERM. restrain our thoughts from it: (the covetous man's XXXIII. heart will be among his bags; the voluptuous man's mind will be in his dishes; the studious person will be musing on his notions, do he what he can;) why then may we not as well, as often direct our minds toward our Lord, and mix the remembrance of him with all other employments or entertainments of our thoughts? To do so is surely very requisite, and very expedient toward our good practice. Things far distant, or long absent, can have small efficacy, or influence: it is so, we see, in natural, and it is no less so in moral causalities; wherein representation to the fancy and memory have a force answerable to that, which real conjunction and approximation have in nature. As the heat and light of the sun, the further he goes, and the longer he stays from us, do the more, proportionably, decrease; so, according to our less frequently and less seriously thinking upon any object, our affection and our respect thereto decay. If therefore we desire, according to our duty, to maintain in our hearts such dispositions (due affection and due reverence) toward Jesus; if we intend to suit our actions accordingly with due regard to him; we should, in order to those purposes, apply this so necessary and useful mean, of frequently bending our minds toward him; the doing of which, in likelihood, will conduce much to the sanctifying our affections, and to the governing our actions in a constant performance of our duty. For we can hardly sure (admitting we do seriously believe him to be such as we profess to believe him) with any competent attention think of him, but that thought will be apt to restrain us from doing ill, to incite us to do well; since together with that thought, some

of his excellent perfections, some of our principal relations, and some of our great obligations to him, (each of which hath much virtue and force to those purposes,) will interpose and represent themselves. Frequently thinking of him, we shall sometimes apprehend him with incessant toil labouring in the service of God, and in promoting the welfare of men ; sometimes we shall imagine him undergoing all kind of contumelies and bitter pains, suffering by the cruel hands and tongues of spiteful men ; we shall, as it were, behold him bleeding under the scourge, and hanging upon the cross for our sakes. Sometimes he will appear to our minds crowned with majesty, reigning in sovereign power and glory, having all things in subjection under his feet ; sometimes also he will be represented as our Judge, before whose tribunal we must all shortly stand, and be obliged to render an account of all our doings : which thoughts passing through our minds, will be apt to make some impression upon our hearts, to have some influence upon our actions. For, can that most amiable and most venerable *idea* of a person so entirely pure and holy, so meek and humble, so full of benignity and charity toward all men, (particularly toward ourselves,) be otherwise than apt to beget some especial love and reverence toward him ; than incline us strongly to do well, yea, than teach us what and how we should do so, in conformity to such a pattern set before us ? it occurring to our thoughts, that he is our Lord and Master, (who made us, and maintains us ; who purchased us to himself, and redeemed us from miserable slavery by his own heart-blood ;) how can it fail to raise in us some awe, some sense of duty toward him ? Will not the apprehension of what he did and what he suffered for us powerfully mind us, that, according

SERM.
XXXIII.

Acts x. 38.

SERM. to all justice and equity, in all ingenuity and gratitude, we are bound to do only that which will please him? If we think of Jesus, when we are setting upon any action, shall we not thereupon be apt thus to interrogate ourselves? Shall I do otherwise than he did, or would have done, so rendering myself unlike or contrary to him? Shall I be so unfaithful to my glorious Master, as to disserve him, or to neglect his service? Shall I be so unworthy toward my gracious Redeemer, my best friend, my most bountiful benefactor, as to disoblige him, to wrong him, to dis-honour him, to grieve him by thus doing? Shall I be so vain and rash as to cross him who is my King, able to control and subdue me; as to offend him who is my Judge, resolved to condemn and punish me? Shall I wilfully forfeit that friendship and favour of his, upon which all my happiness doth depend? Shall I procure his displeasure and enmity, from which my utter ruin must inevitably follow? Such considerations have a natural connection with our frequent thinking upon, and the presence, as it were, of our blessed Saviour to our minds; which therefore may be commended to us as an excellent instrument of bettering our hearts and our lives.

To conclude: Let us all always remember, and consider, that we are Christians, related unto Christ Jesus, and called by his name, and as so, in his name let us do all things.

Lord of all power and might; who art the author and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

SERMON XXXIV.

OF BEING IMITATORS OF CHRIST.

1 COR. iv. 16.

I beseech you, be followers of me: or, I exhort you, be imitators of me^a.

ST. PAUL, by an impartial reflection upon his SERM.
heart and life, being well assured, that he by the di- XXXIV.
vine Spirit was enlightened with a certain knowledge
of all necessary truth, and endued with plentiful
measures of divine grace; being conscious of a sin-
cere zeal in himself to honour God, and benefit men;
being satisfied, that with integrity he did suit his con-
versation to the dictates of a good conscience, to the
sure rule of God's law, and to the perfect example of
his Lord; that his intentions were pure and right,
his actions warrantable, and the tenor of his life con-
spicuously blameless, doth upon all occasions (not
out of any self-conceitedness, arrogance, or ostenta-
tion, from which he, by frequent acknowledgment
of his own defects and his miscarriages, and by as-
cribing all the good he had, or did, to the grace and
mercy of God, doth sufficiently clear himself; but
from an earnest desire to glorify God, and edify
~~his~~ disciples) describe, and set forth his own practice,
proposing it as a rule, pressing it upon them as an
argument, an encouragement, an obligation to the
performance of several duties. So by it he directeth

^a Παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς, μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε.

SERM. and urgeth the Ephesians to a charitable compliance,
XXXIV. or complaisance ; a sweet and inoffensive demeanour
^{1Cor. x. 32,} toward other : *Give no offence*, saith he, *neither to*
^{33. iv. 16.} *the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of*
God : even as I please all men in all things, not
seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that
they may be saved : be ye followers of me : so he
guides and provokes the Philippians to endeavours of
proficiency in grace, and the study of Christian per-
Phil. iii. 16. fection : *Nevertheless*, saith he to them, *whereto we*
^{17.} *have already attained, let us walk by the same rule,*
let us mind the same thing : brethren, be followers
together of me, and mark such as walk so, as ye
have us for an ensample. By the like instance and
argument, he moveth the Thessalonians to a sober
and orderly conversation, to industry in their calling,
to self-denial, and a generous disregard of private in-
^{2 Thess. iii. 17.} terest : *For yourselves*, saith he, *know how ye ought*
^{7, 8, 9.} *to follow us : for we behaved not ourselves disor-*
derly among you ; neither did we eat any man's
bread for nought ; but wrought with labour and
travail day and night, that we might not be charge-
able to any of you ; not because we have not power,
but to make ourselves an example to you to follow
us. The same persons he commendeth, as having
by this means been induced to a patient constancy
^{1 Thess. i. 5, 6.} in faith and good works : *Ye know*, saith he, *what*
manner of men we were among you for your sake,
and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord,
having received the word in much affliction. The
practice of all virtue and goodness he also thus re-
Phil. iv. 9. commendeth under this rule and obligation ; *Those*
things, which ye have learned, and received, and
heard, and seen in me, do ; and the God of peace

shall be with you. Thus in our text (referring it to SERM. the context) he urgeth the Christians, his disciples at XXXIV. Corinth, to fidelity and diligence in the charges and affairs committed to them, to humility, patience, and charity; wherein he declareth himself to have set before them an evident and exact pattern. Which practice of St. Paul doth chiefly teach us two things; that we be careful to give, and that we be ready to follow good example: the latter of which duties more directly and immediately agreeth to the intent of this place; and it therefore I shall only now insist upon: the subject and scope of my discourse shall be to shew, that it is our duty and concernment to regard the practices of good men, and to follow their example. To which purpose we may observe,

I. That it is the manner of the apostles, upon all occasions, to inculcate this duty: we heard St. Paul: hear St. James: *Take, saith he, my brethren, the* ^{James. v. 10.} *prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction: Ye* ^{James. v. 11.} *have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy:* and the apostle to the Hebrews: *We desire, saith he, that every one of you* ^{Heb. vi. 11.} *do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of* ^{12.} *hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises:* and again, *Wherefore seeing* ^{Heb. xii. 1.} *we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* And St. Peter: *Ye wives, be in subjection to your own* ^{Pet. iii. 1, 6.} *husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling*

SERM. *him lord.* And wherever the eminent deeds of XXXIV. holy men are mentioned, it is done with an intimation at least, or tacit supposition, that we are obliged to follow their example.

II. We may consider that to this end (that we might have worthy patterns to imitate) the goodness of God hath raised up in all ages such excellent persons, furnishing them with rare endowments, and with continual influences of his grace assisting them, to this purpose, that they might not only instruct us with wholesome doctrine, but lead us also by good example in the paths of righteousness. For certainly what St. Paul saith concerning the sins and punishments of bad men, is no less applicable to the virtuous

^{1 Cor. x. 11.} deeds and happy examples of good men: *All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

III. *They are written for our admonition:* it was a special design of God's providence in recording and recommending to our regard the divine histories. They were not framed as monuments of a fruitless memory and fame to them; they were not proposed to us as entertainments of our curiosity, as objects of wonder, as matters of idle discourse; that unconcernedly we should gaze upon them, or talk about them, as children look on fine gays: but they are set before us, as copies to transcribe, as lights to guide us in our way to happiness^b. So that if we

^b Μεγίστη δὲ ὁδὸς πρὸς τὴν τοῦ καθήκοντος εἰρεσιν καὶ ἡ μελέτη τῶν θεωρηθεστῶν γραφῶν· ἐν ταῖς γὰρ καὶ αἱ τῶν πράξεων ὑποθήκαις εὑρίσκονται, καὶ οἱ βίοι τῶν μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν ἀναγραπτοὶ παραδεδομένοι οὖν εἰκόνες τινὲς ἔμμιχοι τῆς κατὰ θεὸν πολιτείας, τῷ μυμήματι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων πρίκενται. Bas. ad Greg. Ep. 2.

will not ingratefully frustrate the intentions of divine SERM.
Providence for our good, we must dispose ourselves to XXXIV.
imitate those illustrious patterns of virtue and piety.

IV. We may further consider, that, in the nature of the thing itself, good example is of singular advantage to us, as being apt to have a mighty virtue, efficacy, and influence upon our practice: which consideration should much engage us to regard it, applying it as an instrument of making ourselves good, and consequently of becoming happy. Good example is, as I say, of exceeding advantage to practice upon many accounts.

1. Examples do more compendiously, easily, and pleasantly inform our minds, and direct our practice, than precepts, or any other way or instrument of discipline. Precepts are delivered in an universal and abstracted manner, naked, and void of all circumstantial attire, without any intervention, assistance, or suffrage of sense; and, consequently, can have no vehement operation upon the fancy, and soon do fly the memory; like flashes of lightning, too subtle to make any great impression, or to leave any remarkable footsteps, upon what they encounter; they must be expressed in nice terms, and digested in exact method; they are various, and in many disjointed pieces conspire to make up an entire body of direction: they do also admit of divers cases, and require many exceptions, or restrictions, which to apprehend distinctly, and retain long in memory, needs a tedious labour, and continual attention of mind, together with a piercing and steady judgment. But good example, with less trouble, more speed, and greater efficacy, causes us to comprehend the business, representing it like a picture exposed to

SERM. sense, having the parts orderly disposed and completely united, suitably clothed and dressed up in its circumstances; contained in a narrow compass, and perceptible by one glance, so easily insinuating itself into the fancy, and durably resting therein: in it you see at once described the thing done, the quality of the actor, the manner of doing, the minute seasons, measures, and adjuncts of the action; with all which you might not perhaps by numerous rules be acquainted; and this in the most facile, familiar, and delightful way of instruction, which is by experience, history, and observation of sensible events. A system of precepts, though exquisitely compacted, is, in comparison, but a *skeleton*, a dry, meagre, lifeless bulk, exhibiting nothing of person, place, time, manner, degree, wherein chiefly the flesh and blood, the colours and graces, the life and soul of things do consist; whereby they please, affect, and move us: but example imparts thereto a goodly corpulency, a life, a motion; renders it conspicuous, specious, and active, transforming its notional universality into the reality of singular subsistence. This discourse is verified by various experience; for we find all masters of art and science explicating, illustrating, and confirming their general rules and precepts by particular examples. Mathematicians demonstrate their *theorems* by *schemes* and *diagrams*, which, in effect, are but sensible instances; orators back their *enthymemes* (or rational argumentations) with *inductions*, (or singular examples;) philosophers allege the practice of Socrates, Zeno, and the like persons of famous wisdom and virtue, to authorize their doctrine: politics and civil prudence is more easily and sweetly drawn out of good history, than out of books

le Republica. Artificers describe *models*, and set SERM. patterns before their disciples, with greater success, XXXIV. than if they should deliver accurate rules and precepts to them. For who would not more readily learn to build, by viewing carefully the parts and frame of a well-contrived structure, than by a studious inquiry into the rules of architecture; or to draw by setting a good picture before him, than by merely speculating upon the laws of perspective; or to write fairly and expeditedly, by imitating one good copy, than by hearkening to a thousand oral prescriptions; the understanding of which, and faculty of applying them to practice, may prove more difficult and tedious, than the whole practice itself as directed by a copy? Neither is the case much different in moral concerns ; one good example may represent more fully and clearly to us the nature of a virtue, than any verbose description thereof can do : in sooner time, and with greater ease, we may learn our duty by regarding the deportment of some excellent person, than by attending to many philosophical discourses concerning it^c: for instance, if we desire to know what faith is, and how we should rely upon the divine Providence, let us propose to

^c Xen. 'Απομν. 4. It was Xenophon's observation, grounded upon his own experience, that the memory of Socrates' conversation did greatly profit his acquaintance. Τὸ μεμνῆσθαι μὴ παρόντος ὁ μικρὰ ὀφελεῖ τῶν εἰωθέτας αὐτῷ συνεῖναι. And Seneca saith, that the crowd of philosophers, which followed the same wise man, derived more of their ethics from his manners than his words : *plus ex moribus, quam ex verbis Socratis traxit.* Sen. Ep. 11. And he that shall reflect upon the story concerning his behaviour, when he was by malicious envy persecuted to death, may perhaps be more edified thereby, than by all his subtle discourses about death, and the soul's state after it.

SERM. our consideration the practice of Abraham ; wherein
XXXIV. we may see the father of the faithful leaving a most pleasant country, the place of his nativity, and questionless most dear unto him under that notion ; deserting his home and fixed habitation, his estate and patrimony, his kindred and acquaintance, to wander he knew not where in unknown lands, with all his family, leading an uncertain and ambulatory life in tents, sojourning and shifting among strange people, devoid of piety and civility, (among Canaanites and Egyptians,) upon a bare confidence in the Divine protection and guidance : we may see him, aged ninety-nine years, sensible of his own natural impotence, and an equal incapacity in his consort as to such purposes, yet with a steady belief assuring himself, that from those dead stocks a numerous progeny should spring, and that he, who by all power of nature was unable to beget one child, should, by virtue of God's omnipotent word, become the father of a mighty nation : we may see him upon the first summons of the Divine command, without scruple or hesitancy, readily and cheerfully yielding up his only son (the sole ground of his hope and prop of his family, to whose very person the promise of multiplication was affixed) to be sacrificed and slain ; not objecting to his own reason the palpable inconsistency of counsels so repugnant, nor anxiously labouring to reconcile the seeming contrariety between the Divine promises and commands ; but resolved as it were (with an implicit faith in God) to believe things incredible, and to rely upon events impossible : contemplating these things, let us say what discourse could so livelily describe the nature of true faith, as this illustrious precedent doth.

Again, he that would learn how to demean himself in resisting the assaults of temptation, let him consider that one carriage of Joseph ; of him, together withstanding the courtships of an attractive beauty, and rejecting the solicitations of an imperious mistress, advantaged by opportunities of privacy and solitude ; when the refusal was attended with extreme danger, and all the mischiefs which the disdain of a furious lust disappointed, of an outrageous jealousy provoked, of a loving master's confidence abused, could produce ; and all this by one of meanest condition, in a strange place, where no intercession, favour, or patronage of friends could be had, no equal examination of his cause might be expected ; of him doing this, merely upon principles of conscience, and out of fear of God ; (saying, *How can I do this great evil, and sin against God?*) and he that considers this example, how can he be ignorant of his duty in the like case ?

Again, would we learn wisdom, constancy, and resolution in the conduct of honest and worthy designs, let us set before our eyes the pattern of Moses, and therein take notice, how he, obeying Divine instinct and direction, having embraced that noble purpose of rescuing his countrymen from the Egyptian bondage, of settling them in a method of happy policy, and of bringing them into the promised land of their enjoyment, did behaye himself in the execution thereof ; with how indefatigable industry he solicited their cause with a fickle and deceitful, stupid and hard-hearted king ; enduring frequent disappointments and repulses, together with furious storms of anger, and most terrible menaces from him : how having there surmounted all obstacles,

SERM. and effectually enlarged the people from their restraint in Egypt, he led them on foot through a valley, encompassed with mountains of sea ; and after that undertook a tedious march (a march of forty years) through a wild, barren, and dry solitude, (where no water was, but such as issued from the stony bowels of a rock ; no food, or means of subsistence, but such as was supplied by the miraculous purveyance of Heaven,) in the meanwhile resisting the continual invasions of open enemies, in great numbers with armed violence striving to obstruct his passage, and defeat his purpose ; having also (which was more) his patience constantly exercised in supporting the foward perverseness of a most incredulous and intractable people, which took all occasions of complaint and mutiny against him ; in contesting with the factious rivalry of envious nobles, who repined at his successes, and maligned his authority among them ; in bearing the indiscreet and untoward prevarications of his own most intimate friends and nearest relations, complying with the wicked humours and desires of the people ; in sustaining many other perplexities and crosses ; all which notwithstanding, he with insuperable resolution happily achieved his glorious undertaking : and will not this example, attentively regarded, beyond the power of any other means or method, explain to us the way of industry, courage, and perseverance in good and worthy, though high and difficult enterprises ?

One instance more, and that of all most pertinent to our occasion : Would you be instructed how faithfully to discharge the ministerial, or any other office ? With a steadfast attention then behold the

excellent pattern of St. Paul; consider how in all SERM.
his designs he zealously and singly aimed at the XXXIV.
honour and service of God, neglecting his own safety,
quiet, credit, and all worldly accommodations for the
advancement of them: how affectionately he tend-
ered the good and welfare of those, the care of
whose spiritual condition was commended to him,
using all his skill, care, and strength in promoting
their edification; declaring himself for their good to
be content, not only for a time to be absent from the
Lord, being deprived of that happiness which he
otherwise impatiently groaned for, and was fully
assured of; but desirous, as it seems, to be secluded
for ever from his blissful presence, by a dreadful
anathema, for their sake: how prudently, meekly,
and humbly he demeaned himself toward them;
becoming all things to all men, forming himself into
all allowable shapes and colours; undergoing all
sorts of censure and imputations, (of a despicable,
an ignorant, a foolish person;) tempering his speech
and deportment to their capacities and needs, bear-
ing their miscarriages, and complying with their
weaknesses; parting freely with his own just liberty,
pleasure, and satisfaction, for their spiritual advan-
tage: how generously he despised his own profit
and ease, refusing that supply he might with all
reason and equity have required from them; choosing
to maintain himself with the labour of his own
hands, and the sweat of his brows, that he might
render the gospel nowise burdensome or offensive to
them: how vigilantly and courageously he withstood
the mischievous endeavours of false brethren, and
treacherous seducers; earnestly contending for the
church's peace and quiet against factious spirits, and

SERM. for the substantial truths of the gospel against the
XXXIV. pernicious devices of heretics and false teachers: how patiently he sustained all manner of pains, griefs, travels, wants, losses, hazards, distresses, disappointments, affronts, and reproaches, for the honour of God, the benefit of his spiritual children, the discharge of his duty, and satisfaction of his conscience: these things, I say, regard, and then tell me, if he might not reasonably inculcate this admonition, *Imitate me*; and if his example be not of rare use to instruct us, how faithfully we should in our respective charges and employments demean ourselves. I might in like manner instance how excellent a rule of devotion the practice of the royal prophet may be unto us; how Elias's practice might teach us to be zealous champions for truth and righteousness; how they who would be good judges, or honest patriots, may receive direction from the carriage of Samuel, Daniel, and Nehemiah^d. But I proceed to say that further,

II. Good examples do not only inform, but they persuade and incline our reason to good practice, commanding it to us by plausible authority; a way of reasoning the most plain, easy, and suitable to all men's capacities; less subject to error and doubt than any other in particular cases; whereby as it is always more easy to know what is good and fit, so commonly it is most safe; there being few, who can so well discern what is good, as they may rest in the judgments of others. For that wise and virtuous persons do any thing, is a very probable argument, that we are obliged and concerned to do the like;

^d Τιμονῆς οὐν διδάσκαλος ἔριστος ὁ τοῦ μακαρίου Ἰωβ βίος, ἀνεξικακίας ὁ τοῦ Μωσέως, πραότητος ὁ τοῦ Δαβὶδ, &c. Chrys. tom. v. p. 656.

seeing such persons may in all their actions be supposed to have an unbiassed regard to the rules of truth and justice. He therefore who can say, that Abraham, or David, or St. Paul did so in such a case, supposeth that he hath no small reason to do the like ; it is accounted pardonable, yea almost commendable, to err with such persons ; because it is done with good appearance of reason, seeing such persons were themselves unlikely to err : *Will you, saith Cicero^c, commemorate to me Scipio's, and Cato's, and Lælius's, and say they did the same thing ; though the thing displeases me, yet I cannot withstand the authority of such men : their authority is so great, that it can cover even the suspicion of a fault.* It is obvious in temporal concernments, how great a stroke this way of discourse hath ; how boldly men adventure their dearest interets in following such, whom they probably deem honest, and able to guide them : for instance, in travelling, if one being ignorant or doubtful of his way happen to meet a person, whom he conceives able, and nowise concerned or disposed to mislead him, he without scruple follows him, and confidently relies on his direction. In like manner, all good men in the way of virtuous practice tending directly toward happiness, (our common journey's end;) it being their design, their interest, and their endeavour not to mistake the way, not to deflect from the right and nearest course thereto, men are apt to

^c Africanos mihi, et Catones, et Lælios comminemorabis, et eos fecisse idem dices, quamvis res mihi non placeat, tamen contra hominum auctoritatem probare non potuero. Magna est hominum auctoritas, et etiam tanta, ut delicti suspicionem tegere possit. *Cic. in Verr. iii.*

SERM. think it reasonable and safe to accompany in their XXXIV. progress, or to press after them in their steps: and surely, next to a clear and certain rule, there is not any more rational warrant for practice, and consequently no better inducement thereto, than such good precedents. Further,

III. Examples do incite our passions, and impel them to the performance of duty. They raise hope, they inflame courage, they provoke emulation, they urge upon modesty, they awaken curiosity, they affect fancy, they set in motion all the springs of activity. It may not be amiss to shew how, particularly,

1. They raise hope, by discovering to us and assuredly proving the feasibility of matters propounded, or the possibility of success in undertaking good designs, and that by the best and most convincing of arguments, experience. Nothing so depresseth hope and advanceth despondency, as an apprehension of impossibility, or, which is equivalent thereto, an extreme difficulty (appearing to surmount our present forces) in the business to be attempted: of such a conceit desperation seemeth a reasonable

Chrys. tom. consequence. For, τὸν ἀδυνάτων ἐφίσθαι μακέν, it is a i. p. 69. *madness to aim at impossibilities;* and such, considering the great infirmity of human nature, its strong propensions to evil, and averseness from good, together with the manifold impediments and allurements objecting themselves in the way of good practice, all duties as barely represented in precepts, and pressed by rational inducements might seem to be, if good example did not clearly demonstrate them to be possible, yea sometimes facile; even those, which upon a superficial view do seem most difficult,

and insuperable by our weak endeavour. The sto- SERM.
ical doctrine, which described a fine and stately por- XXXIV.
traiture of virtue, and inculcated very strict rules,
(a close following of God and nature, a perfect vic-
tory over self, the subduing all passions, and over-
ruling all corporeal appetites; an entire freedom,
composure, and tranquillity of mind; a total indif-
ference in respect of fortune and all external events,
with the like duties, rarely practised, although, upon
all accounts, acknowledged conformable to reason,) was therefore by most rejected as useless, or exploded as ridiculous, as being presumed to propound matters purely imaginary and unpracticable: yet he that had seen this doctrine in great measure exemplified by Zeno, the first master of it, would have had no such reason to contemn it, nor to despair of practising according to it, if he would seriously endeavour it: exemplified, I say, by Zeno, whereof we have an illustrious testimony from a solemn decree of the Athenians: ἐξεῖδη Ζήνων Μνασέαν, &c. Laert. in Zen. Whereas Zeno, the son of Mnaseas the Cittican, having many years professed philosophy in this city, and as well in all other things hath demeaned himself like a good man, as particularly exhorting the young men, who went to be instructed by him, hath provoked them to virtue and sobriety; withal exhibiting his own life a pattern of the best things answerable to the discourses he used to make; it is therefore auspiciously decreed by the people, that Zeno the son of Mnaseas be solemnly praised and crowned (according to the usage) with a golden crown; and that a monument be erected for him at the public charge in the Ceramicum, (the place where those were interred who had

SERM. bravely exposed their lives for public defence.) This
XXXIV. was indeed a noble attestation and a comely respect
exhibited to a virtuous conversation ; making in
some measure a satisfaction for the heinous affront
done thereto, when, instead of honouring it with a
crown, they rewarded it with a cup of poison, given
to the excellent Socrates. Suitably to which testi-
mony Seneca saith of Cleanthes, that his virtuous
practice depended more upon the observation of
Zeno's life, than the information of his doctrine.
*Zenonem Cleanthes non expressisset, si eum tan-
tummodo audisset: vitæ ejus interfuit, secreta per-
spexit, observavit illum an ex formula sua viveret.*
Cleanthes, saith he, had not so nearly resembled
Zeno, if he had only attended to his discourses :
he was present to his life, he took notice of his pri-
vate carriage, he observed whether his practice
did suit to his doctrine. So that stoicism itself,
which speaketh such prodigies, was, it seems, founded
not only upon big words, the issues of a speculative
fancy, but more upon the good practice of its first
master and institutor. And indeed he that would
effectually persuade the undertaking of any enter-
prise, must either suppose it, or prove it effectible ;
and the most easy, the most evident way of proving
it is by example. Men, saith Pliny junior well, *are
better instructed by examples, which have in them
chiefly this advantage, that they do prove the
things may be done which they enjoin.* And, *Hu-
man infirmity,* saith Salvian to the same purpose,
*requires the assistance of example, that it may
more easily now perform that which it knows others
to have before done; all posterity being admon-
ished by hearing that what hath once been done,*

may be done again. And, *The example*, saith St. SERM. Bernard, *of a work done is a lively and efficacious oration, easily persuading what we intend, by proving that feasible which we strive to persuade unto*^f. Upon which score we therefore are exceedingly obliged to those holy men, who by their practice have assured us, that the highest duties exacted of us by our religion (the mortification of unreasonable desires, the suppression of irregular passions, the loving and blessing our enemies, the renouncing worldly vanities and pleasures, the rejoicing in afflictions, the voluntary abdication of our estates in some cases, yea, exposing life itself to inevitable hazard and loss,) are not chimerical propositions of impossible performances; but duties (if we shall seriously and vigourously apply our endeavours to them, and suffer our hopes to be elevated by their example) really practicable. Piety abstractedly viewed in precept may seem an airy project, a name, a notion; but it being seen in example will prove a matter substantial, true, and feasible. A direct and pure speculation thereof may dazzle our sight, and dash our hopes; but as being reflected from persons practising it, we may bear its lustre, and hope to attain it.

^f Melius homines exemplis docentur, quæ imprimis hoc boni habent, quæ approbant, quæ præcipiunt fieri posse. *Plin. Jun. Paneg.*

Adjuvari se exemplis exoptat humana infirmitas, quo facilius ipsa nunc faciat, quæ alios fecisse ante cognoscat; dum admonetur auditu ætas omnis fieri posse, quod factum est. *Salv. ad Eccl. Cath.*

Sermo quidam vivus et efficax exemplum operis est, facile persuadens quod intendimus, dum factibile probat esse quod suademus. *Bern. de Resur. Serm. iii.*

Ex aliorum factis fieri posse credunt, quod forte cum putant fieri non posse pigrescunt. *Cyp. Ep. l. ii. 2.*

SERM. 2. Examples do inflame courage. So the apostle to XXXIV. the Hebrews signifieth, when to this purpose he intimateth, that he mentioned and setteth before them the examples of the patriarchs; that he thereby might excite their courage, and cause them resolutely to undertake that obedience, and patiently to undergo those afflictions, which they performed and sustained; *that, saith he, ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.* For that heat, and active spirit, which in some degree resideth in all men's breasts, is by example kindled, as one flame is kindled by the contact or approach of another. How many persons, timorous and averse from dangerous undertakings, have notwithstanding become very bold and adventurous in war, by the discipline and influence of an exemplary valour! It is Plutarch's observation concerning Cæsar's soldiers, that they who in service under other commanders did not exceed the ordinary rate of courage, nor excel their fellows, did yet when he led them become irresistibly valiant, being animated and inspired by his unparalleled gallantry: and who is there indeed so incurably heartless, so desperately sluggish or stupid, whom the sight of a valiant leader marching before into the mouth of danger, will not infuse fire and vigour into, and instigate forward into a participation of brave adventure? So example doth by a kind of contagion insinuate courage, or inveigle men thereinto; beside that it is a kind of daring, and proclaimeth him a dastard ~~that~~ will not imitate it; which imputation the lowest courage of man can hardly digest, and will there-

————— Fortis in armis
Cæsareis Labienus erat.

re, by doing somewhat answerable, strive to decline SERM.
XXXIV.

3. Again : Examples provoke emulation^h; which another strong principle of activity ; moving us earnestly to desire, and thence eagerly to pursue, whatever good, privilege, or advantage, we see another to enjoy. To observe another of the same nature and capacities with ourselves to have shone with an illustrious virtue, to be consecrated to posterity by a lasting fame, and to be crowned with glorious rewards above; what other reflections of thought in it produce in us, than such as these ? Shall he, a man like myself, endued with the same faculties, appetites, and passions ; subject to the same infirmities, temptations, needs, cares, and encumbrances of life ; shall he, by noble dispositions of soul, and worthy performances, render himself highly considerable ; while I, by sordid qualities and unworthy practices, ebase and render myself despicable ? Shall he leave behind him monuments of eternal praise, while I do nothing worthy of regard or memory ? Shall he enjoy the favour of the great God, and the comforts of blessed eternity, but I be wholly deprived of that joyful estate, and plunged into endless sorrows and desperate misery ? Shall a Joseph stoutly resist and overcome the strongest temptations, and I be easily affled by the least solicitation of vice ? Shall a stripping David gloriously triumph over giants, while I easily am vanquished by dwarfs ? Shall Job be stripped of all his goods with contentedness, and endure the most grievous pains with patience, while I am discomposed for any small loss, and dismayed by

^h Chrys. tom. i. p. 77. tom. vi. p. 148. tom. v. Orat. 101.

Φύσει γὰρ φιλόκαλον οὖσαν τὴν φύσιν τῶν ἀνθράκων εἶδες ὁ Κύριος, &c.

SERM. the least cross accident? Shall Abraham here, by his
XXXIV. faith and obedience, attain to be called the friend of God, and rest for ever in his glorious and happy bosom, while I deservedly am refused the honour and comfort of that heavenly communion here, and shall hereafter be cast out from that blissful presence, into the dismal mansions of wretched folly and wickedness? Did Paul, once a stubborn Jew, a blind Pharisee, a grievous blasphemer, a bloody persecutor, by a seasonable conversion repair his state, approve himself to God by an eminent zeal for his glory, undergo restless pains, run desperate hazards, and endure all sorts of distresses for the propagation of God's heavenly truth, obtaining thence a never-fading crown of glory in heaven, and a perpetual renown upon earth; and shall I then, who from my youth have been educated in the most true and holy religion, who have by solemn engagements devoted myself thereto, who may without any trouble or danger profess and practise according to that holy discipline, proceed in wicked courses, provoking God's wrath, and attracting his vengeance upon me? No: since the capacities are alike, since the means are common, since the rewards of piety are promiscuously exposed and offered unto all, why should I, by deplorable perverseness or negligence, suffer myself to be deprived of it and its benefits? Why shall not I become as good, as commendable, as happy as any other man? These are the conceits and voices of natural emulation, that mighty passion (so often and by many effects it discovereth itself to be) implanted in our original constitution to be as a spur and incentive, stimulating and inflaming us unto the ready undertaking and vigorous pursuit of good purposes; the

which perhaps hath produced more noble effects than SERM. any other passion or inclination of our souls : for all XXXIV. manner of excellency in knowledge, in prowess, in virtue, how often doth it issue from this source ! Doth not the admired fame of men notable for learning, (recorded in story, or subject to present observation,) and a jealousy of being surpassed in accomplishments competent to human nature, sharpen the appetite, and rouse the industry of most scholars, whom neither the love of knowledge nor its apparent usefulness could anywise persuade to bear so much toil in acquist thereof¹? Do not all histories acquaint us, that the most gallant enterprises and exploits of famous warriors have derived their beginning from an emulation of the glory purchased by their ancestors ? (wisdom and valour have thus especially been propagated ; one man's signal excellency being parent to the like in many others.) And that this passion may in like manner be subservient to the production of virtue and piety, is plain enough from parity of reason, and from experience ; and we have (for further argument thereof) the apostle's practice using it to this purpose : St. Paul employed it as an engine for the conversion of his dear countrymen ; whom, by raising in them a jealousy of being outstripped, in God's favour, and its effects, by the Gentiles, he endeavoureth to provoke to the embracing of the Christian faith : *I speak to you Gentiles*, saith he, Rom. xi. *inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles*, *I magnify my office*, εἰ τῷ παραγγελῶσι μον τὴν σάρκα, if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

¹ Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
Tollere humo.

SERM. And St. James instigateth us unto fervency of prayer,
XXXIV. by minding us, that *Elias was a man of like passions*
James, v. 17. *with ourselves;* yet was able by his prayers to shut
 and open heaven, to procure barrenness and fertility
 to the earth. And the apostle to the Hebrews chargeth
 us, to *consider one another*, εἰς παροξυσμὸν ἀγάπης, καὶ
 καλῶν ἔργων, so as to provoke one another (or by mu-
 tual emulation to sharpen one another) *to charity*
and good works.

4. Examples do work upon modesty, *that preserver and guardian of virtue*, as Cicero calls it^k. For every good action of another doth upbraid, reproach, and shame him who acteth not conformably thereto. Can we without a trembling heart, and blushing forehead, view the practices of the ancient saints, if ours be altogether unlike them? If they, to please God and secure their salvation, did undergo such prodigious pains in assiduous devotions, abstinences, watchings, and we contrariwise are extremely sluggish, cold, and negligent in the performance of our ordinary duties; if they willingly renounced all sensual complacencies, and we either cherish ourselves in a soft delicacy of life, or wallow in a profane dissolution of manners; if they, to free themselves from distracting cares, voluntarily disburdened themselves of all needless encumbrances, and we are wholly busy in heaping up wealth, and driving on worldly interests; if they gladly embraced and endured the sharpest afflictions, and we are terrified by the thought, are overwhelmed by the sense of the least disappointment, or distasteful occurrence; how can we without extreme regret of mind, and confu-

^k Custos omnium virtutum, dedecus fugiens, laudemque maxime consequens verecundia est. Cic. Part. Rhet.

sion of face, consider their practice, or compare it SERM. with ours ? It is a profligate impudence of him that XXXIV. can daily hear and read the stories of their doings, without being deeply sensible, and ashamed at the dissonance appearing between their course of life and his.

5. Example awakens that curiosity, which is natural to us, and of no mean efficacy upon our actions. For whatever we see done, we are apt to be inquisitive concerning it ; why and to what purpose it is done, what the grounds are, and what the fruits of the performance ; especially if the matter seem considerably important, and the action proceedeth from a person deserving respect ; whereof having passed some competent judgment, we are by the same instinct of curiosity further transported into a desire of discerning by our trial and experience whether the event correspondeth to our expectation ; so are we easily induced to imitate the actions of others. By which means as vice ordinarily is conceived and propagated, (men by a preposterous and perverse curiosity being inveigled to try what they see others affect or enjoy,) so may virtue also by the same means be engendered and nourished ; the general ways of producing and maintaining those contrary habits being alike. As, therefore, it is a great blemish and reproach to human nature, that,

— Faciles imitandis

JUVEN.

Turpibus et pravis omnes sumus —

we, as the satyrist truly observeth of us, have a great proclivity to follow naughty examples ; so there is from hence some amends, that we have also some inclination to imitate good and worthy precedents ; the which is somewhat more strong and

SERM. vigorous, because countenanced and encouraged by
XXXIV. the approbation of reason, our most noble faculty.

6. Examples also do please the mind and fancy in contemplation of them, thence drawing a considerable influence upon practice. No kind of studious entertainment doth so generally delight as history, or the tradition of remarkable examples : even those who have an abhorrency or indisposition toward other studies, (who have no genius to apprehend the more intricate subtleties of science, nor the patience to pursue rational consequences,) are yet often much taken with historical narrations ; these striking them with a delectable variety of accidents, with circumstantial descriptions, and sensible representations of objects, do greatly affect and delight their fancies ; especially the relation of notable adventures and rare accidents is wont to be attended with great pleasure and satisfaction. And such are those, which present to us the lives and examples of holy men, abounding with wonders of providence and grace : no attempts so gallant, no exploits so illustrious, as those, which have been achieved by the faith and patience, by the prudence and courage of the ancient saints; they do far surpass the most famous achievements of pagan heroes. It was, I dare say, more wonderful, that Abraham with his retinue of household servants should vanquish four potent and victorious kings ; and that Gideon with three hundred unarmed men should discomfit a vastly numerous host, than that Alexander with a well-appointed army of stout and expert soldiers should overturn the Persian empire. The siege of Jericho is so far more remarkable than those most famous ones of Numantia and Saguntus, as it is more strange

that the blast of trumpets and the noise of people shouting should demolish walls, than the shaking them with rams, or discharging massy stones against them. And he, that carefully will compare the deeds of Samson and Hercules, shall find, that one true exploit performed by the former doth much in force and strangeness surmount the twelve fabulous labours of the other: no triumphs indeed are comparable to those of piety; no trophies are so magnificent and durable, as those which victorious faith erecteth: that history therefore which reports the *res gestæ*, the acts and sufferings of most pious men, must in reason be esteemed not only the most useful, but also the most pleasant; yielding the sweetest entertainment to well-disposed minds; wherein we see virtue expressed, not in bare idea only, but in actual life, strength, motion; in all its beauty and ornaments: than which no spectacle can be more stately; no object more grateful can be presented to the discerning eye of reason.

7. We may furthermore consider, that God hath provided and recommended to us one example, as a perfect standard of good practice; the example of our Lord: the which declareth the use and efficacy of good example, as one principal instrument of piety. That indeed is the most universal, absolute, and assured pattern; yet doth it not supersede the use of other examples: not only the valour and conduct of the general, but those of inferior officers, yea, the resolution of common soldiers, do serve to animate their fellows. The stars have their season to guide us, as well as the sun; especially when our eyes are so weak, as hardly to bear the day. Even, considering our infirmity, inferior examples by their imper-

SER.M. fection sometime have a peculiar advantage. Our
XXXIV. Lord's most imitable practice did proceed from an immense virtue of divine grace, which we cannot arrive to; it in itself is so perfect and high, that we may not ever reach it; looking upon it may therefore sometimes dazzle and discourage our weakness: but other good men had assistances in measure, such as we may hope to approach unto; they were subject to the difficulties, which we feel; they were exposed to the perils of falling, which we fear: we may therefore hope to march on in a reasonable distance after them; we may, by help of the same grace, come near in transcribing their less exact copy.

To conclude: Since upon so many accounts we are obliged to follow good examples; since they are of so great use toward our proceeding in the way to happiness; thence they conduce to the clear instruction of our understanding, to the forcibly inclining our reason, to the vehement excitement of our passions, to the delightfully affecting our imagination in subserviency to good practice; let us make that due and profitable use of them, which we should and may do. Let us, with diligent attention perusing the sacred history, meditate upon the lives of holy men therein propounded as patterns of a persevering faith in God, and conscientiable obedience to his commandments. Let the light of their exemplary practice in all kind of piety and virtue continually shine upon our souls, to direct our minds, to inflame our affections, to quicken our resolutions, to detect the errors and correct the faults of our lives, that we, imitating their virtuous and pious conversation, may partake of those comfortable rewards, of that joy and bliss whereof they rest possessed. The

which God Almighty, and our blessed Saviour, the SERM.
author and finisher of our faith, by his gracious aid XXXIV.
and blessing grant unto us; to whom be all glory
and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

S E R M O N XXXV.

ABIDING IN CHRIST TO BE DEMONSTRATED BY WALKING AS CHRIST DID.

1 JOHN ii. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk as he walked.

SERM. XXXV. **T**O abide in Christ, to be in Christ, to put on Christ; and reciprocally Christ's being in us, living, dwelling, being formed in us; and the like expressions occurring in holy scripture, do not denote any physical inherence, or essential conjunction between Christ and us, (such as those who affect unintelligible mysteries, rather than plain sense, would conceit,) but only that mutual relation accruing from our profession of being Christ's disciples, our being inserted into his body the church, being governed by his laws, partaking of his grace, with all the privileges of the gospel, relying upon his promises, and hoping for eternal salvation from him. By virtue of which relation, we may be said, in a mystical or moral manner, to be united to him, deriving strength and sustenance from him, as the members from the head, the branches from the tree, the other parts of the building from the foundation; by which similitudes this mysterious union is usually expressed in scripture: in effect, briefly, to be in, or to abide in Christ, implieth no more, but our being truly in faith

and practice Christians; so that the meaning of St. John's words seemeth plainly and simply to be this: SERM. XXXV.
Whoever pretends to be a Christian, (that is, to believe the doctrine and embrace the discipline of Christ,) ought to walk (that is, is obliged to order the whole course of his life and actions) as Christ walked, (that is, as Christ did live and converse in the world:) or, it is the duty of every one, professing Christianity, to conform his life to the pattern of Christ's life, to follow his example, to imitate his practice. This is the importance of the words, this the subject of our present discourse.

I. For illustration and confirmation of which point, we may observe, that the holy apostles do upon all occasions assume this supposition, when they would persuade their disciples to the practice of any virtue, or performance of any duty; enforcing their exhortations, by representing the practice of Christ as an unquestionable ground of obligation, and an effectual inducement thereto. Hence they incite them to holiness; *But, saith St. Peter, as he* ^{1 Pet. i. 15.} *that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation:* to charity; *And walk in* ^{Eph. v. 2.} *love, saith St. Paul, as Christ also loved us:* to patience; *Because, saith St. Peter, Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* And, *Let us, saith the apostle to* ^{Heb. xii. 1.} *the Hebrews, run with patience the race that is* ² *set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross:* to humility; *Let, saith St. Paul, the same mind be in you, which was also* ^{6, 7.} *in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but*

SERM. *made himself of no reputation*: to charitable com-
XXXV. pliance, and inoffensive demeanour toward others,
1Cor. x. 33. intimated by St. Paul, when he says, *Even as I
xi. 1.*
*please all men in all things, not seeking my own
profit, but the profit of many, that they might be
saved: Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ:*
Rom. xv.
2, 3. and again, *Let every one please his neighbour for
his good to edification; for even Christ pleased
not himself.* Thus do the apostles take all occasion,
from the like practice of Christ, to persuade the per-
formance of duty; and the strength of their argu-
ment lieth upon the evidence of this supposition,
that all professing themselves Christians are espe-
cially obliged to imitate Christ's example. And their
authority may be backed and enforced by several
reasons.

II. Doing so hath a reasonableness and decency
grounded upon our relations to Christ: it is fit and
comely that the manners of the disciple should be
regulated by those of his master; that the servant
should not, in his garb and demeanour, dissent or
vary from his lord; that the subject should conform
his humour to the fashion of his prince; especially
that we should thus comply and conform to such a
Master, such a Lord, such a Prince, whom (upon
highest considerations) by a most voluntary choice,
and in a most solemn manner, we have absolutely
devoted ourselves unto: this reason our Lord doth
himself urge: *Ye, saith he to his disciples, call me
Master, and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am:
if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed
your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's
feet.*

III. Following Christ's example is requisite to

demonstrate the sincerity of our faith, love, and reverence to him. It is the most natural way of testifying affection and respect, to imitate the manners of those persons, who are the objects of those acts and dispositions, to esteem what they approve, to delight in what they affect, and consequently (since actions do proceed from affections) to do as they do. Contrary actions are plain arguments of contrary judgments, inclinations, and affections. Who can imagine we sincerely believe in Christ, or heartily love him, or truly honour him, that seeth us to loathe what he liked, or affect what he detested ; to contemn what he prized, or value what he despised ; to neglect what he pursued, or embrace what he avoided ? But if our lives resemble his, any man will thence collect our respect and affection to him : this argument our Saviour doth also intimate : *By John xiii. 35. this, saith he, shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye love one another* ; that is, it will be an evident sign and strong argument, that ye really do believe in, love, and honour me, if ye imitate me in my charity.

IV. By pretending to be Christians we acknowledge the transcendent goodness, worth, and excellency of our Saviour ; that he was incomparably better and wiser than any person ever was, or could be ; that he always acted with the highest reason, out of the most excellent disposition of mind, in order to the best purposes ; and that his practice therefore reasonably should be the rule and pattern of ours. For the best and exactest in every kind is the measure of the rest. All that would obtain exquisite skill in any art or faculty, think best to imitate the works of the best masters therein : a painter,

SERM. to draw after the pieces of Zeuxis or Apelles, of Raphael or Titian ; an orator, to speak in the style of Cicero or Demosthenes ; a soldier, to emulate the military achievements of Hannibal or Cæsar : in like manner, reason requireth, if we would live well and happily, that we should endeavour to conform our practice to that of our Saviour, the most perfect mirror of all virtue and goodness.

V. The practice of our Saviour did thoroughly agree with his doctrine and law ; he required nothing of us which he did not eminently perform himself. He *fulfilled* in deed, as well as taught in word, *all righteousness*. He was not *ignava opera, philosophica sententia* ; like those masters of philosophy, so frequently taxed and derided by the satyrist^k ; who, by a horrid garb, supercilious looks, and loud declamations, would seem to discountenance those vices which themselves practised ; nor like those hypocritical lawyers in the gospel, who laded other men with *heavy burdens*, such as themselves would *not touch with one of their fingers* : no, he imposed nothing on us which he did not first bear upon his own shoulders : the strictness of his life did, in all respects, correspond with the severity of his precepts, or rather did indeed much exceed them. They therefore who pretend to believe his doctrine, and avow themselves bound to observe his law, are consequently engaged to follow his practice, in which his doctrine and law are signally exemplified.

VI. It being the design of divine goodness, in sending our Saviour, to render us good and happy, to deliver us from sin and misery, to instruct us in

^k Οὐδὲν ψυχρότερον τοῦ κατὰ λόγους φιλοσοφῶντος. Chrys.

^l Ω, τὸ βῆμα τοῦ τρέπον κατήγορον. Naz.

the knowledge and excite us to the practice of all S.E.R.M.
virtue, and thereby to qualify us for the enjoyment XXXV.
of a blessed immortality; effecting all this in a way
agreeable to our natural condition and capacity;
there could not be devised any more powerful means,
or more convenient method, of accomplishing those
excellent purposes, than by propounding such an
example, and obliging us to comply therewith: the
which may appear, 1. by considering in general the
advantage and efficacy that good example is apt to
have upon practice; 2. by weighing the peculiar
excellency of our Saviour's example above all others,
in order to those ends; and, 3. by surveying the
particular instances of imitable goodness represented
in the life of our Saviour.

1. Good example is naturally an effectual instrument of good practice; for that it doth most compendiously, pleasantly, and easily instruct; representing things to be done at one view, in a full body, clothed with all their modes and circumstances; it recommends them to us by the most plain and plausible way of reasoning, (and withal the most sure and safe,) the authority of wise and good men; it encourageth by evidently declaring the practicableness of rules prescribed; it kindleth and rouseth men's courage, by a kind of contagion, as one flame doth kindle another; it raiseth a worthy emulation of doing laudable things, which we see done; or of obtaining a share in the commendations and rewards of virtue. It urgeth modesty, breeding shame and regret in them who act contrarily thereto; it awakeneth curiosity, thereby producing a desire to make trial of what it proposeth; it affecteth and pleaseth the fancy, thereby insinu-

SERM. ating an approbation, admiration, and liking of the
XXXV. good things which it representeth: briefly, it ex-
citeth and engageth all our passions, setting on work
all those powerful springs of activity; it conse-
quently is, in its own nature, an efficacious mean of
good practice. This we may in general say of all
good example; but,

2. More especially the example of Christ doth, in
efficacy and influence upon good practice, surpass all
others; upon several accounts.

First, In that it is a sure and infallible rule, an
entire and perfect rule of practice; deficient in no
part, swerving in no circumstance from truth and
right, which privileges are competent to no other
example. The practice of the best men is not al-
ways to be imitated, nor ever absolutely as a certain
ground of action; it is to be (so far as we have
ability) considered, examined, and compared to more
certain rules, (the divine laws and the principles of
right reason,) according to their agreement with
which they are to be followed: they are indeed
(before trial of the case) probable arguments of what
is done by them being good and lawful; they do
outweigh slender and obscure reasonings about the
goodness of things; they may, when opportunity,
leisure, or ability of further inquiry and judgment
about things are wanting, serve to direct us; but
they are not thoroughly sure rules, or perfect mea-
sures of our duty. We should beware lest we be
seduced even by holy persons; and, therefore, with
circumspection and caution should peruse their story,
and contemplate their demeanour; whereof those
which are explicitly commended, or allowed by the
divine judgment, we may, being assured that we are

in the same circumstances, safely follow, (taking S E R M. them for monitors, encouragements, and excite- XXXV. ments to our duty;) but those that are directly condemned by the same sentence, or apparently devious from God's law, we as carefully should avoid; 'such as are of a doubtful and unaccountable nature we are to suspend about, and not to ground upon; nor to argue from the fact to the rightfulness of them; the safest way being always (as we are able) to have recourse to the simple, plain, and perspicuous precepts of God, and dictates of reason. For the best men have been always subject to errors and infirmities; the fountain of original corruption in them was never so dried up, or closely stopped, but that some impure streams have bubbled forth; the fire of natural concupiscence was never so utterly quenched, but that sometimes it would blaze, or smoke out in bad actions; that intestine enemy, the flesh, was never thoroughly subdued, nor the body of sin quite slain and mortified in any other mortal man. Good men have ever had some foul spots, or deforming wrinkles, appearing in the beauteous face of their conversation; they have had their inequalities and indispositions of humour, their ebbs of devotion, their fits of sloth, their wanton freaks, their slips often, and sometimes their falls; they have been subject to be deluded by mistake, to be surprised by inadvertency, to be transported by passion, to be swayed by temper, to be biassed by interest, to be allured by temptation into false and unwarrantable

¹ It was ill said of Seneca: Catoni ebrietas objecta est, et facilius efficiet, quisquis objecerit hoc crimen, honestum, quam turpem Catonem.

SERM. proceedings; they might sometimes fail in the substance, oftener in the degree, in the manner, in the circumstances of action; we find them often complaining of their proneness to do amiss, bemoaning the wretched frailty of their state; yea, often repenting and bitterly mourning for their actual transgressions: there hardly is any saint, recorded in scripture, without some blemish in his actions; which shews our weakness, and engageth us to be wary. They were, indeed, endowed with sufficient competences of divine light, and graces suitable to their private needs, or to the public exigencies of their times, places, occasions, and affairs; but not with the perfection and extreme degrees thereof, requisite to preserve them from all miscarriage; so that we are not always, or in all cases, to conform our actions to their examples: we must not learn to equivocate of Abraham; nor to circumvent of Jacob; nor to be choleric of Moses, (so as in our excess of passion to break the tables of the divine law;) nor of Eli to be fondly affectionate or indulgent to our relations; nor of David to utter uncharitable imprecations; nor to dissemble of St. Peter; nor of St. Paul to revile magistrates. The use we are to make of many practices of most eminently pious men, is not to be misguided by them into wrong paths; not by them to authorize or excuse our presumptuous misdeeds; but to make us to admire and to rely upon the divine mercy, which so graciously did overlook and pardon their offences; to provoke us to an imitation of their repentance; to render us watchful in shunning those rocks, upon which persons so skilful in the conduct of their lives have dashed; to engage us to humility, by considering so manifest arguments

of our frailty, and our being obnoxious to greater S E R M.
and more frequent miscarriages. XXXV.

But as to our Saviour's example, the case is quite different; for though he did miracles as God, he commanded as Christ; he did many heroical things in discharge of his office, &c. in which things we cannot, or may not, imitate him: yet, whatever in his life was, in its own nature, imitable by us, which did not exceed our natural powers, nor disagree with our condition and quality: whatever he as man, in a private capacity, as subject to the divine law, with regard thereto, performed, we may, with all freedom, confidence, and security, imitate. Nor can so doing incur any danger of error or guilt; for we cannot, without great folly and impiety, suspect any fault or imperfection in his most pure, righteous, and innocent life: he was *holy, harmless, undefiled*, Heb.vii. 26. *and separated from sinners*; he was *a lamb without blemish and without spot*; he was in all points Heb. iv. 15. *tempted as we are, yet without sin*. He did no 1 Pet. ii. 22. *sin, nor was any guile found in his mouth*. God John iii. 34. *gave him of his Spirit not by measure*. These are the voices and elogies of the sacred oracles concerning him. The heavenly extraction even of his humanity derived no original contagion from our polluted stock, and rendered him free from the common incentives of evil concupiscence. The inseparable presence of the Divinity with him, (*for God was with him*, as St. Peter expressed it,) and the unrestrained effusion of the Holy Spirit upon him, did preserve him from all defilements of infectious conversation in this world; a clear evidence of divine light always shining in his soul directed him infallibly in the paths of truth and righteousness: no

SERM. tempest of cross accidents without, nor any estuations of internal passion, could discompose the steady calm and serenity of his mind ; no allurement of worldly pleasure, nor temptation of profit, could pervert his practice, or seduce his heart; being inflamed with most intense love of God, and entire charity to men : so that his example must needs be a perfect rule and sure direction to us. Which consideration cannot but yield great encouragement and comfort in following him ; freeing us from all anxious doubt and suspicion of mistake in our spiritual progress ; like the presence of a sure guide to the bewildered traveller ; like the appearance of a star to the weather-beaten mariner ; like that miraculous pillar of fire, which safely conducted the wandering Israelites through the unknown and unfrequented passages of a wild desert. But further,

Secondly, The peculiar excellency of our Lord's example appears, in that he was, by the divine Providence, to this very purpose designed, and sent into the world, as well by his practice as by his doctrine, to be the guide and master of holy life and obedience to all men ; and did accordingly propound to himself this end of his actions, that he might be imitated by his disciples. So he declareth himself as to some considerable passages of his life ; and thence, by reasonable inference, we may suppose the same of the rest, so far as they might be conducible to the same end ; especially, since of some performances no other, or no so probable, account can be given, as that they were done for exemplarity : for why should he fast, who had no sins to be repented of, no rebellious flesh to be tamed, no intemperate desires to be mortified, no coldness of devotion to be

enlivened thereby^a? And why did he offer himself SER M.
to be baptized, who had no original stain to be XXXV.
cleansed of, no fault to be forgiven, no want of spe-
cial grace to be conferred? Why, but, by his exem-
plary fulfilling all righteousness, to teach us ready
obedience to all divine institutions, and peaceable
compliance with all laudable customs? So an ancient
writer wisely descanteth upon those practices of our
Saviour: *He was, saith that writer, baptized, and
fasted, not because he had need of any cleansing
or fasting, who in nature was pure and holy; but
that he might attest to the truth of St. John, and
might exhibit a pattern to us*^b. What induced him
to condescend to such a misbeseeming employment
to appearance, as the washing of his disciples' feet, he
doth himself tell us: *If I then, saith he, your Lord
and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also
to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an
example, that ye should do as I have done unto
you.* This was his professed scope and drift, in that
admirable deportment of his, to teach us humility,
charity, and condescension toward the meanest of our
brethren. What did those exuberant instances of
charity, practised by him, import? This especially,
that we should imitate them: hither he drives them;
This, saith he, is my commandment, that ye love ^{John xv. 12.}
one another, as I have loved you. Why was he in
his disposition so meek and gentle, in his conversa-
tion so humble and lowly? To this purpose, that we

^a Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὸς ἐνήστευσεν, οὐκ αὐτὸς ταῦτης δεόμενος, ἀλλὰ ἡμᾶς παιδεύων. Chrys. tom. ii. p. 81.

^b Ἐβαπτίσθη καὶ ἐνήστευσεν οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀπορεύσεως, ἢ προτελεις χρεῖαν ἔχων, ἢ καθάρσεως, ὁ τῇ φύσει καθάρος καὶ ἄγιος, ἀλλὰ Ἰησοῦν ἀλήθειαν προσμαρτυρήση, καὶ ἡμῖν ἴπουραμψὸν παρέσχηται.

SERM. might of him learn those excellent qualities : *Learn
XXXV. of me, saith he, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*

Mat. xi. 29. And St. Peter saith, *That Christ suffered for us,*
1 Pet. ii. 21.

leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps; signifying that he designed his patience to be exemplary to us. If then our Saviour, in his humility, his charity, his meekness, his patience, intended his life to be exemplary, and expressly propounded it as such ; then certainly, in his devotion, his self-denial, his justice, in all other virtues, he had the same intention ; and what he intended, God designed to be ; and what God designed to be, was doubtless eminently conducible to the end designed ; and therefore our Saviour's life was most exemplary. Other saints indeed were of very exemplary conversation ; but either proved to be so, according to ordinary course of Providence, without any peculiar designation thereto, (their free choice conspiring with God's grace in producing good works shining before men,) or at most by a restrained determination to some particular time, place, or people ; as Moses was

Acts vii. 35. chosen and appointed to conduct the Israelites ; Da-
Psal. cxi. 23.
Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71. *vid was taken from the sheepfold, and following the*

ewes great with young, to feed Jacob God's people,

Jer. i. 5. *and Israel his inheritance ;* Jeremy was sanctified from his birth, and ordained to be a prophet of the nations in his times ; and St. Paul was separated from the womb to be a preacher of the Christian faith ; these, and such like eminent persons, Almighty God, in his goodness, was pleased to raise up, to be, in their generations, as it were, partial and temporary saviours, as by declaring his will, and revealing his truth to men, so by guiding them with a remarkable

John v. 35. example : these *burning and shining lamps* (as St.

John the Baptist is called) were indeed like lamps SERM.
set up in some particular families, with a competent XXXV.
lustre, to dispel the present darkness, shining within ^{λύχνος ἡ}
^{κατόπιν της οὐρανοῦ}
their definite sphere, and for a determinate time: but ^{φαινεται.}
our Saviour, like the sun, fixed in a higher orb, was
ordained with a perpetual and unconfined splendour
to illuminate the universe, to cause a general and
everlasting day of healthful and comfortable know-
ledge over the face of the whole earth. He was *that John i. 9.*
true light, which enlighteneth every man coming
into the world; He was prepared before the face Luke ii. 31,
of all people, to be a light to lighten the nations;^{32.}
(not Israel only, but the *nations* indefinitely, or all
nations.) He was ordained, not commander of a *Heb. ii. 10.*
single regiment, or party, but captain-general of all
mankind, to conduct all those who were disposed to
follow him, by a victorious obedience, into that tri-
umphant estate of everlasting joy and happiness.
His example doth belong unto us all, without excep-
tion, by divine ordination; for *we, all of us, were* (to
use St. Paul's expression) *predestinated to be con-*^{Rom. viii.}
formed to the image of God's Son; that he might^{29.}
be the firstborn among many brethren. So it was,
and so it became the infinite goodness and philan-
thropy of God, to bestow upon mankind one perfectly
good example, inviting to all virtue, and so fit to
countervail all those many bad ones, wherewith we
converse, enticing to vice; to set forth, among so *John v. 19.*
many imperfect ones, one accomplished piece of his ^{Ἄ γὰρ ἦ}
^{ἰκανὸς των ἄλλων,}
heavenly workmanship, able to attract the eyes and ^{ταῦτα καὶ δ}
^{τὰς ὄψes}
ravish the hearts of all men with admiration of its^{τοιούτου.}
excellent worth and beauty; to offer to our view
some discernible representation of his invisible per-
fections; that so we might better be induced and

SERM. inured to apprehend, love, reverence, and imitate himself by contemplation of that most exquisite image of him ; to give an evident proof that the highest virtue is not unpracticable, that human nature, by aid and guidance of the divine Spirit, may arrive to the sublimest pitch of perfection in goodness : in fine, to expose such a common, sweet, and lovely pattern, as we with assurance, joy, and comfort may follow.

Thirdly, Our Saviour's example is especially influential upon practice, in that it was, by an admirable temperament, more accommodated for imitation than any others have been ; that the perfect copy of his most holy life seems more easy to be transcribed, than the ruder draughts of other holy men : for though it were written with an incomparable fairness, delicacy, and evenness ; not slurred with any foul blot, not any where declining from exact straightness ; yet were the lineaments thereof exceedingly plain and simple ; not by any gaudy flourishes, or impertinent intrigues, rendered difficult to studious imitation ; so that even women and children, the weakest and meanest sort of people, as well as the most wise and ingenious, might easily perceive its design, and with good success write after it. His was a gentle and steady light, bright indeed, but not dazzling the eye ; warm, but not scorching the face of the most intent beholder ; no affected singularities, no supercilious morosities, no frivolous ostentations of seemingly high, but really fruitless performances ; nothing that might deter a timorous, discourage a weak, or offend a scrupulous disciple, is observable in his practice : but, on the contrary, his conversation was full of lowliness and condescension, of meekness and sweetness, of openness and candid simplicity ;

apt to invite and allure all men to approach toward SERM. it, and with satisfaction to enjoy it. He did not XXXV. seclude himself into the constant retirements of a cloister, nor into the further recesses of a wilderness, (as some others have done,) but conversed freely and indifferently with all sorts of men, even the most contemptible and odious sort of men, *publicans* and *sinners*; like the sun, with an impartial bounty, liberally imparting his pleasant light and comfortable warmth to all. He used no uncouth austerities in habit or diet; but complied, in his garb, with ordinary usage, and sustained his life with such food as casual opportunity did offer; so that his indifferency in that kind yielded matter of obloquy against him from the fond admirers of a humorous precision. His devotions (though exceedingly sprightly and fervent) were not usually extended to a tedious and exhausting durance, nor strained into ecstastical transports, charming the natural senses, and overpowering the reason; but calm, steady, and regular, such as persons of honest intention and hearty desire (though not endued with high fancy, or stirring passion) might readily imitate. His zeal was not violent or impetuous, except upon very great reason, and extraordinary occasion, when the honour of God, or good of men, was much concerned. He was not rigorous in the observance of traditional rites and customs, (such as were needlessly burdensome, or which contained in them more of formal show than of real fruit,) yet behaved himself orderly and peaceably, giving due respect to the least institution of God, and complying with the innocent customs of men; thereby pointing out unto us the middle way between peevish superstition and boisterous

SERM. faction ; which as always the most honest, so com-
XXXV. monly is the most safe and pleasant way to walk in.

He delighted not to discourse of sublime mysteries, (although his deep wisdom comprehended all,) nor of subtle speculations and intricate questions, such as might amuse and perplex, rather than instruct and profit his auditors ; but usually did feed his auditors with the most common and useful truths, and that in the most familiar and intelligible language ; not disdaining the use of vulgar sayings, and trivial proverbs, when they best served to insinuate his wholesome meaning into their minds. His whole life was spent in exercise of the most easy and pleasant, yet most necessary and substantial duties ; obedience to God, charity, meekness, humility, patience, and the like ; the which, that he might practise with the greatest latitude, and with most advantage for general imitation, he did not addict himself to any particular way of life, but disengaged himself from all worldly care and business ; choosing to appear in the most free, though very mean condition ; that he might indifferently instruct, by his example, persons of all callings, degrees, and capacities ; especially the most, that is, the poor ; and might have opportunity, in the face of the world, to practise the most difficult of necessary duties ; lowliness, contentedness, abstinence from pleasure, contempt of the world, sufferance of injuries and reproaches. Thus suited and tempered by divine wisdom was the life of our blessed Saviour, that all sorts of men might be in an equal capacity to follow him, that none might be offended, affrighted, or disengaged ; but that all might be pleased, delighted, enamoured, with the homely majesty and plain

beauty thereof. And in effect so it happened, that SERM. ordinary people (the weakest, but sincerest and un- XXXV. prejudiced sort of men) were greatly taken with, most admired and applauded his deportment; many of them readily embracing his doctrine, and devoting themselves to his discipline; while only the proud, envious, covetous, and ambitious *scribes* and *lawyers* rejected his excellent doctrine, scorned the heavenly simplicity and holy integrity of his life.

Fourthly, The transcendent excellency of our Lord's example appeareth, in that it is attended with the greatest obligations, (of gratitude and ingenuity, of justice, of interest, of duty,) mightily engaging us to follow it. For it is not the example of an ordinary or inconsiderable person, of a stranger, of one indifferent or unrelated to us; but of a glorious prince, of heavenly extraction, (the firstborn Son of the Almighty God, sole heir of eternal Majesty,) of our Lord and Master, to whom we are for ever bound by indispensable bands of duty and obedience; of our great Captain, who hath undertaken to subdue our enemies, and hath obliged us to follow his conduct, in a holy warfare against them, by most solemn sacraments and vows; of our best Friend, from whom we have received the greatest favours and benefits imaginable; of our most gracious Saviour, who, for our sake, hath voluntarily sustained most bitter pains and shameful contumelies; having sacrificed his dearest heart-blood to redeem us from intolerable slaveries, and from extremities of horrible misery; of him, to whom, in all respects, we do owe the highest respect, love, and observance that can be. Now it is the nature and property both of respect and love (such as upon so

SERM. many grounds we owe to him) to beget, in the per-
XXXV. son respecting and loving, an endeavour, answerable
 to the degrees of those dispositions, of conforming
 to, and resembling, the qualities and manners of the
 person respected or beloved. We see how readily
 children do comply with the customs of their parents
 and tutors; servants of their masters and patrons;
 subjects of their princes and governors, with a sta-
 dious earnestness composing themselves to express
 in their carriage, not only their good or their indif-
 ferent fashions and manners, but even their most
 palpable deformities and vices; insomuch, that a
 whole family, a city, a nation, may be debauched
 from its sobriety, or reformed from its dissoluteness,
 even instantly, by the example of one person, who,
 by his place, power, and authority, challengeth ex-
 traordinary reverence from men: and much greater
 influence hath hearty love to transform our manners
 into an agreement with the manners of him we love:

*"Ο γὰρ ἄγα-
 ντος τις καὶ
 μηδέτερος
 αἰσθάνεται.
 Hier."* *What a man loves, that he imitateth so much as*
lies in his power, saith Hierocles truly. For love

being founded on a good esteem, and a benevolent
 inclination thence resulting, engageth the affection-
 ate person to admire the qualities of him he affect-
 eth, to observe his deportments, to make the most
 advantageous construction of what he doeth; to
 fancy he doeth all things with best reason and dis-
 cretion; to deem, therefore, that all his actions de-
 serve and require imitation: hence doth love either
 find, or soon produce, a competent similitude in the
 parties, (a similitude of mind, of will, of inclination,
 and affection, an *eadem velle et nolle*:) it doth forc-
 ibly attract as to a vicinity of place and converse, so
 to an agreement of affections and actions; it uniteth

the most distant, it reconcileth the most opposite, it SERM. turneth the most discordant natures into a sweet XXXV. consent and harmony of disposition and demeanour. We then having the greatest reason both to honour and love our Saviour, surely his example being duly studied and considered by us, must needs obtain a superlative influence upon our practice, and be very powerful to conform and assimilate it to his.

These considerations may suffice to shew the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example in virtue, and efficacy upon our practice ; the same more abundantly might be deduced from a survey of the most considerable particulars, in which we may and ought to imitate him. But the time will not suffer us to launch forth into so vast a sea of discourse. I shall only, therefore, from the premises, exhort, that if any earnest desire of happiness, any high esteem of virtue, any true affection to genuine sanctity do lodge in our breasts, we should apply this most excellent means of attaining them ; the study and endeavour of imitating the life of our Lord. If we have in us any truth and sincerity, and do not vainly prevaricate in our profession of being Christ's disciples, and votaries of that most holy institution, let us manifest it by a real conformity to the practice of him who is our Master, and Author of our faith. If we have in us any wisdom, or sober consideration of things, let us employ it in following the steps of that infallible Guide, designed by Heaven to lead us in the straight, even, and pleasant ways of righteousness, unto the possession of everlasting bliss. If we do verily like and approve the practice of Christ, and are affected with the innocent, sweet, and lovely comeliness thereof, let us declare such our mind by

SERM. a sedulous care to resemble it. If we bear any honour and reverence, any love and affection to Christ; if we are at all sensible of our relations, our manifold obligations, our duties to our great Lord, our best Friend, our most gracious Redeemer; let us testify it by a zealous care to become like to him: let a lively image of his most righteous and innocent, most holy and pious, most pure and spotless life be ever present to our fancies; so as to inform our judgments, to excite our affections, to quicken our endeavours, to regulate our purposes, to correct our mistakes, to direct, amend, and sanctify our whole lives. Let us, with incessant diligence of study, meditate upon the best of histories, wherein the tenor of his divine practice is represented to us; revolving frequently in our thoughts all the most considerable passages thereof, entertaining them with devout passions, impressing them on our memories, and striving to express them in our conversations: let us endeavour continually to walk in the steps of our Lord, and *to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*; which that we may be able to do, do thou, O blessed Redeemer, draw us; draw us by the cords of thy love; draw us by the sense of thy goodness; draw us by the incomparable worth and excellency of thy person; draw us by the unspotted purity and beauty of thy example; draw us by the merit of thy precious death, and by the power of thy holy Spirit; *Draw us, good Lord, and we shall run after thee.* Amen.

Coll. after
Easter, 2.

Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; give us grace, that we may always most thankfully receive that his ines-

*timable benefit ; and also daily endeavour our- SERM.
selves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy XXXV.
life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

SERMON XXXVI.

OF SUBMISSION TO THE DIVINE WILL.

LUKE xxii. 42.

Matt. xxvi. *Nevertheless let not my will, but thine, be done.*

^{39.}

SERM. **XXXVI.** **T**HE great controversy, managed with such earnestness and obstinacy between God and man, is this, whose will shall take place, his or ours. Almighty God, by whose constant protection and great mercy we subsist, doth claim to himself the authority of regulating our practice and disposing our fortunes: but we affect to be our own masters and carvers; not willingly admitting any law, not patiently brooking any condition, which doth not sort with our fancy and pleasure. To make good his right, God bendeth all his forces, and applieth all proper means both of sweetness and severity, (persuading us by arguments, soliciting us by entreaties, alluring us by fair promises, scaring us by fierce menaces, indulging ample benefits to us, inflicting sore corrections on us, working in us and upon us by secret influences of grace, by visible dispensations of providence;) yet so it is, that commonly nothing doth avail, our will opposing itself with invincible resolution and stiffness.

Here indeed the business pincheth; herein as the SERM.
chief worth, so the main difficulty of religious prac- XXXVI.
tice consisteth, in bending *that iron sinew*; in bring-
ing our proud hearts to stoop, and our sturdy hu-
mours to buckle, so as to surrender and resign our
wills to the just, the wise, the gracious will of our
God, prescribing our duty, and assigning our lot
unto us. We may accuse our nature, but it is our Chrys. tom.
pleasure; we may pretend weakness, but it is wil- ^{vi. Or. 12.} in 1 Cor.
fulness, which is the guilty cause of our misdemean- ^{Or. 17.} tom. v. Or.
ours; for by God's help (which doth always prevent ^{28, 43.})
our needs, and is never wanting to those who seri-
ously desire it) we may be as good as we please, if
we can please to be good; there is nothing within
us that can resist, if our wills do yield themselves
up to duty: to conquer our reason is not hard; for
what reason of man can withstand the infinite co-
gency of those motives, which induce to obedience?
What can be more easy, than by a thousand argu-
ments, clear as day, to convince any man, that to
cross God's will is the greatest absurdity in the
world, and that there is no madness comparable
thereto? Nor is it difficult, if we resolve upon it, to
govern any other part or power of our nature^a; for
what cannot we do, if we are willing? What incli-
nation cannot we check, what appetite cannot we
restrain, what passion cannot we quell or moderate?
What faculty of our soul, or member of our body, is
not obsequious to our will? Even half the resolu-
tion, with which we pursue vanity and sin, would
serve to engage us in the ways of wisdom and
virtue.

^a Quodcunque sibi imperavit animus obtinuit. *Sen. de Ira,*
ii. 12.

SERM. Wherefore in overcoming our will the stress lieth;
XXXVI. this is that impregnable fortress, which everlastingly
 doth hold out against all the batteries of reason and
 of grace; which no force of persuasion, no allurement
 of favour, no discouragement of terror can reduce:
 this puny, this impotent thing it is, which grappleth
 with Omnipotency, and often in a manner baffleth
 it: and no wonder, for that God doth not intend to
 overpower our will, or to make any violent impres-
 sion on it, but only to *draw it* (as it is in the pro-
 phet) *with the cords of a man*, or by rational in-
 duements to win its consent and compliance: our
 service is not so considerable to him, that he should
 extort it from us; nor doth he value our happiness
 at so low a rate, as to obtrude it on us. His victory
 indeed were no true victory over us, if he should
 gain it by main force, or without the concurrence of
 our will; our works not being our works, if they do
 not issue from our will; and our will not being our
 will, if it be not free: to compel it were to destroy
 it, together with all the worth of our virtue and obe-
 dience: wherefore the Almighty doth suffer himself
 to be withheld, and beareth repulses from us; nor
 commonly doth he master our will otherwise, than
 by its own spontaneous conversion and submission
 to him^b: if ever we be conquered, as we shall share
 in the benefit, and wear a crown; so we must join in
 the combat, and partake of the victory, by subduing
 ourselves: *we must take the yoke upon us*; for God
 is only served by volunteers; he summoneth us by

^b Ἐπεὶ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὰ διαβάλλει τὰ ἀγαθὰ εἰ μὴ τοιαύτη αὐτῶν ἔστι
 ἡ φύσις, ὡς καὶ ἐκόντας προσδραμεῖν, καὶ χάριν ἔχειν πολλήν. Chrys. in
 1 Cor. Orat. 2.

his word, he attracteth us by his grace, but we must SER.M.
freely come unto him. XXXVI.

Our will indeed, of all things, is most our own ; the only gift, the most proper sacrifice we have to offer ; which therefore God doth chiefly desire, doth most highly prize, doth most kindly accept from us. Seeing then our duty chiefly moveth on this hinge, the free submission and resignation of our will to the will of God ; it is this practice, which our Lord (who came to guide us in the way to happiness, not only as a teacher by his word and excellent doctrine, but as a leader, by his actions and perfect example) did especially set before us, as in the constant tenor of his life, so particularly in that great exigency which occasioned these words, wherein, renouncing and deprecating his own will, he did express an entire submission to God's will, a hearty complacence therein, and a serious desire that it might take place.

For the fuller understanding of which case, we may consider that our Lord, as partaker of our nature, and *in all things* (bating sin) *like unto us*, had a natural human will, attended with senses, appetites, and affections, apt from objects incident to receive congruous impressions of pleasure and pain ; so that whatever is innocently grateful and pleasant to us, that he relished with delight, and thence did incline to embrace ; whatever is distasteful and afflictive to us, that he resented with grief, and thence was moved to eschew : to this probably he was liable in a degree beyond our ordinary rate ; for that in him nature was most perfect, his complexion very delicate, his temper exquisitely sound and fine ; for so we find, that by how much any man's constitution

SERM. is more sound, by so much he hath a smarter gust of
XXXVI. what is agreeable or offensive to nature : if perhaps sometimes infirmity of body, or distemper of soul, (a savage ferity, a stupid dulness, a fondness of conceit, or stiffness of humour, supported by wild opinions or vain hopes,) may keep men from being thus affected by sensible objects ; yet in him pure nature did work vigorously, with a clear apprehension and lively sense, according to the design of our Maker, when into our constitution he did implant those passive faculties, disposing objects to affect them so and so, for our need and advantage ; if this be deemed weakness, it is a weakness connected with our nature,
'Ενταῦθα τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν ἐπικύρωσεν.
Heb. v. 2. which he therewith did take, and *with which*, as the apostle saith, *he was encompassed*. Such a will our Lord had, and it was requisite that he should have it, that he thence might be qualified to discharge the principal instances of obedience, for procuring God's favour to us, and for setting an exact pattern before us ; for God imposing on him duties to perform, and dispensing accidents to endure, very cross to that natural will, in his compliance and acquiescence thereto, his obedience was thoroughly tried ; his virtue did shine most brightly ; therefore, as the apostle saith, *he was in all points tempted* ; thence, as to meritorious capacity and exemplary influence, *he was perfected through suffering.*

Hence was the whole course of his life and conversation among men so designed, so modelled, as to be one continual exercise of thwarting that human will, and closing with the divine pleasure : it was predicted of him, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God* ; and Heb. x. 7. Psal. xl. 7. of himself he affirmed, *I came down from heaven,* John vi. 38. v. 30. iv. 34. *not to do mine own will, but the will of him that*

sent me: whereas therefore such a practice is little seen in achieving easy matters, or in admitting pleasant occurrences; it was ordered for him, that he should encounter the roughest difficulties, and be engaged in circumstances most harsh to natural apprehension and appetite; so that if we trace the footsteps of his life from the sordid manger to the bloody cross, we can hardly mark any thing to have befallen him apt to satisfy the will of nature. Nature liketh respect, and loatheth contempt; therefore was he born of mean parentage, and in a most homely condition; therefore did he live in no garb, did assume no office, did exercise no power, did meddle in no affairs, which procure to men consideration and regard; therefore an impostor, a blasphemer, a sorcerer, a loose companion, a seditious incendiary, were the titles of honour and the elogies of praise conferred on him; therefore was he exposed to the lash of every slanderous, every scurrilous, every petulant and ungoverned tongue.

Nature doth affect the good opinion and good-will of men, especially when due in grateful return for great courtesy and beneficence; nor doth any thing more grate thereon, than abuse of kindness: therefore could he (the world's great Friend and Benefactor) say, *the world hateth me*; therefore were those, John vii. 7. whom he with so much charity and bounty had instructed, had fed, had cured of diseases, (both corporal and spiritual,) so ready to clamour, and commit outrage upon him; therefore could he thus expostulate, *Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?* John x. 32. Therefore did his kindred slight him, therefore did his disciples abandon him, therefore did the grand John xiii. 18.

SERM. traitor issue from his own bosom ; therefore did that
XXXVI. whole nation, which he chiefly sought and laboured
 to save, conspire to persecute him, with most ran-
 corous spite and cruel misusage.

Nature loveth plentiful accommodations, and ab-
 horreth to be pinched with any want : therefore was
 extreme penury appointed to him ; he had no reve-
 nue, no estate, no certain livelihood, not *so much as*

Matt. iii. 20. xvii. 25. xxi. 19. *a house where to lay his head*, or a piece of money to
Luke viii. 3. discharge the tax for it ; he owed his ordinary sup-
 port to alms, or voluntary beneficence ; he was to

seek his food from a *fig tree on the way* ; and some-
 times was beholden for it to the courtesy of publicans ;

2 Cor. viii. 9. *δι' ιημᾶς ἐπτάχενσε, he was,* saith St. Paul, *a beggar*
for us.

Nature delighteth in ease, in quiet, in liberty :
 therefore did he spend his days in continual labour,

John iv. 6. in restless travel, in endless vagrancy, *going about*
Matt iv. 23. ix. 35. *and doing good* ; ever hastening thither, whither the

Acts x. 38. needs of men did call, or their benefit invite ; there-
Phil. ii. 7. fore did he *take on him the form of a servant*, and

Luke xxii. 27. *Mark vi. 6.* was among his own followers *as one that ministereth* ;
 therefore he *pleased not himself*, but suited his de-
 meanour to the state and circumstances of things,
 complied with the manners and fashions, comported
 with the humours and infirmities of men.

Nature coveteth good success to its designs and
 undertakings, hardly brooking to be disappointed and
 defeated in them : therefore was he put to water dry
 sticks and to wash negroes, that is, to instruct a
 most dull and stupid, to reform a most perverse and
 stubborn generation ; therefore his ardent desires, his
 solicitous cares, his painful endeavours for the good
 of men did obtain so little fruit, had indeed a con-

trary effect, rather aggravating their sins than removing them, rather hardening than turning their hearts, rather plunging them deeper into perdition, than rescuing them from it; therefore so much in vain did he, in numberless miraculous works, display his power and goodness, convincing few, converting fewer by them; therefore, although he taught with ^{Luke iv. 22,} most powerful authority, with most charming grace-^{32.} fulness, with most convincing evidence, yet, *Who*, ^{Joh. xii. 38.} could he say, *hath believed our report?* Though he most earnestly did invite and allure men to him, offering the richest boons that heaven itself could dispense, yet, *Ye will not*, was he forced to say, *come* ^{Joh. v. 40.} *unto me, that ye may be saved:* although, with assiduous fervency of affection, he strove to reclaim them from courses tending to their ruin, yet how he prospered sad experience declareth, and we may learn from that doleful complaint, *How often would* ^{Luke xiii.} *I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye would not!* *οὐκ ἔθελήσατε*, your will did not concur, your will did not submit.

In fine, natural will seeketh pleasure, and shunneth pain: but what pleasure did he taste? what inclination, what appetite, what sense did he gratify? How did he feast, or revel? How, but in tedious fastings, in ^{Mark i. 13,} frequent hungers, by passing whole nights in prayer ^{Luke v. 16.} and retirement for devotion upon the cold mountains?^{35.} What sports had he, what recreation did he take,^{John iv. 6,} but feeling incessant gripes of compassion, and wea-^{31.} risome roving in quest of the lost sheep? In what conversation could he divert himself, but among those, whose doltish incapacity and forward humour did wring from his patience those words, *How long* ^{Matt. xvii. 17.}

SERM. *shall I be with you ? how long shall I suffer you ?*
XXXVI.

What music did he hear? What but the rattlings of clamorous obloquy, and furious accusations against him? To be desperately maligned, to be insolently mocked; to be styled a king, and treated as a slave; to be spit on, to be buffeted, to be scourged, to be drenched with gall, to be crowned with thorns, to be nailed to a cross; these were the delights which our Lord enjoyed, these the sweet comforts of his life and the notable prosperities of his fortune: such a portion was allotted to him, the which he did accept from God's hand with all patient submission, with perfect contentedness, with exceeding alacrity, never repining at it, never complaining of it, never flinching from it, or fainting under it; but proceeding on in the performance of all his duty and prosecution of his great designs with undaunted courage, with unwearied industry, with undisturbed tranquillity and satisfaction of mind.

Had indeed his condition and fortune been otherwise framed; had he come into the world qualified with a noble extraction; had he lived in a splendid equipage; had he enjoyed a plentiful estate and a fair reputation; had he been favoured and caressed by men; had he found a current of prosperous success; had safety, ease, and pleasure waited on him; where had been the pious resignation of his will, where the precious merit of his obedience, where the glorious lustre of his example? How then had our frailty in him become victorious over all its enemies; how had he triumphed over the solicitations and allurements of the flesh, over the frowns and flatteries of the world, over the malice and fury of hell? How then could he have so demonstrated his

mense charity toward us, or laid so mighty obli- SERM.
tions upon us? XXXVI.

Such in general was the case, and such the de-
rangement of our Lord: but there was somewhat pe-
uliar, and beyond all this occurring to him, which
ew forth the words of our text: God had tempered
r him a potion of all the most bitter and loathsome
gredients that could be; a drop whereof no man
er hath, or could endure to sip; for he was not
ly to undergo whatever load human rage could
pose, of ignominious disgrace and grievous pain;
it to feel dismal agonies of spirit, and those *un-
seen sufferings^h*, which God alone could inflict,
od only could sustain: *Behold, and see*, he might Lam. i. 12.
*ell say, if there be any sorrow like unto my sor-
row, which is done unto me; wherewith the Lord
ath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger?*
le was to labour with pangs of charity, and through
is heart to be pierced with deepest commiseration
f our wretched case: he was to crouch under the
urden of all the sins (the numberless most heinous
ns and abominations) ever committed by mankind:
e was to pass through the hottest furnace of divine
engeance, and by his blood to quench the wrath of
eaven flaming out against iniquity: he was to
tand, as it were, before the mouth of hell, belching
re and brimstone on his face: his grief was to sup-
ly the defects of our remorse, and his suffering in
hose few moments to countervail the eternal tor-
rents due to us: he was to bear the hiding of God's
ace, and an eclipse of that favourable aspect, in
which all bliss doth reside; a case which he that so
erfectly understood, could not but infinitely resent:

^c Δι' ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἐλέησεν ἡμᾶς Κύριε. Lit. Gr.

SERM. these things with the clearest apprehension he saw
XXXVI. coming on him; and no wonder that our nature started at so ghastly a sight, or that human instinct should dictate that petition, *Father, if thou wilt, let this cup pass from me*; words implying his most real participation of our infirmity; words denoting the height of those sad evils which encompassed him, with his lively and lowly resentment of them; words informing us, how we should entertain God's chastisements, and whence we must seek relief of our pressures, (that we should receive them, not with a scornful neglect or sullen insensibility, but with a meek contrition of soul; that we should entirely depend on God's pleasure for support under them, or a releasement from them;) words which, in conjunction with those following, do shew how instantly we should quash and overrule any insurrection of natural desire against the command or providence of God. We must not take that prayer to signify any purpose in our Lord to shift off his passion, or any wavering in resolution about it; for he could not anywise mean to undo that, which he knew done with God before the world's foundation; he would not unsettle that, which was by his own free undertaking and irreversible decree: he that so often with satisfaction did foretell this event, who with so earnest desire^d longed for its approach; who with that sharpness of indignation did rebuke his friend offering to divert him from it; who did again repress St. Peter's animosity with that serious ex-postulation, *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* who had advisedly laid such trains for its accomplishment, would he decline

John xviii.
11.

^d Ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐκεθύμησα. Luke xxii. 15.

' Could that heart, all burning with zeal for God S E R M.
d charity to men, admit the least thought or mo- XXXVI.
n of averseness from drinking that cup, which
is the sovereign medicine administered by divine
sdom for the recovery of God's creation ? No ; Matt. xxvi.
d he spake with such intent, legions of angels had ^{53.}
wn to his rescue ; that word, which framed the
rlds, which stilled the tempests, which ejected
vils, would immediately have scattered his ene-
es, and dashed all their projects against him :
erefore those words did not proceed from inten-
n, but as from instinct, and for instruction ; im-
rting, that what our human frailty was apt to
ggest, that his divine virtue was more ready to
other ; neither did he vent the former, but that
might express the latter.

He did express it in real effect, immediately with
readiness addressing himself to receive that un-
voury potion ; he reached out his hand for it,
elding fair opportunity and advantages to his per-
cutors ; he lifted it up to his mouth, innocently
ovoking their envy and malice ; he drank it off
th a most steady calmness and sweet composure
mind, with the silence, the simplicity, the meek-
ss of a lamb carried to the slaughter ; no fretful
ought rising up, no angry word breaking forth,
t a clear patience, enlivened with a warm charity,
ining in all his behaviour, and through every cir-
mstance of his passion.

Such in his life, such at his death, was the prac-
e of our Lord ; in conformity whereto we also
adily should undertake whatever God proposeth,
gladly should accept whatever God offereth, we
gorously should perform whatever God enjoineth,

SERM. we patiently should undergo whatever God imposeth
XXXVI. or inflicteth, how cross soever any duty, any dispensation may prove to our carnal sense or humour.

To do thus, the contemplation of this example may strongly engage us; for if our Lord had not his will, can we in reason expect, can we in modesty desire to have ours? Must we be cockered and pleased in every thing, whenas he was treated so coarsely, and crossed in all things? Can we grutch at any kind of service or sufferance? Can we think much (for our trial, our exercise, our correction) to bear a little want, a little disgrace, a little pain, when the Son of God was put to discharge the hardest tasks, to endure the sorest adversities?

But further to enforce these duties, be pleased to cast a glance on two considerations: 1. What the will is to which, 2. Who the willer is to whom we must submit.

1. What is the will of God? Is it any thing unjust, unworthy, or dishonourable, any thing incommodious or hurtful, any thing extremely difficult or intolerably grievous, that God requireth of us to do or bear? No: he willetteth nothing from us or to us, which doth not best become us and most behove us; which is not attended with safety, with ease, with the solidest profit, the fairest reputation, and the sweetest pleasure.

Two things he willetteth; that we should be good, and that we should be happy; the first in order to the second, for that virtue is the certain way, and a necessary qualification to felicity.

¹ Thess. iv.
³. *The will of God,* saith St. Paul, *is our sanctification:* What is that? what, but that the decays of our frame, and the defacements of God's image

within us, should be repaired ; that the faculties of SERM.
our soul should be restored to their original integrity XXXVI.
and vigour ; that from most wretched slaveries we
should be translated into a happy freedom, yea, into
a glorious kingdom ; that from despicable beggary
and baseness we should be advanced to substantial
wealth and sublime dignity ; that we should be
cleansed from the foulest defilements, and decked
with the goodliest ornaments ; that we should be
cured of most loathsome diseases, and settled in a
firm health of soul ; that we should be delivered
from those brutish lusts, and those devilish passions,
which create in us a hell of darkness, of confusion,
of vexation, which dishonour our nature, deform our
soul, ruffle our mind, and rack our conscience ; that
we should be endowed with those worthy disposi-
tions and affections, which do constitute in our
hearts a heaven of light, of order, of joy, and peace,
dignify our nature, beautify our soul, clarify and
cheer our mind ; that we should eschew those prac-
tices, which never go without a retinue of woful
mischiefs and sorrows, embracing those which always
yield abundant fruits of convenience and comfort ;
that, in short, we should become friends of God, fit
to converse with angels, and capable of paradise.

God, saith St. Paul again, *willeth all men to be* ^{1 Tim. ii. 4.}
saved : he willeth not, saith St. Peter, *that any man* ^{2 Pet. iii. 9.}
should perish. He saith it himself, yea, he sweareth
it, *that he hath no pleasure in the death of the* ^{Ezek.}
wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his ^{xxxiii. 11.}
way and live. And what is this will ? what, but
that we should obtain all the good whereof we are
capable ; that we should be filled with joy, and
crowned with glory ; that we should be fixed in an

SERM. immoveable state of happiness, in the perpetual enjoyment of God's favour, and in the light of his blissful presence; that we should be rid of all the evils to which we are liable; that we should be released from inextricable chains of guilt, from incurable stings of remorse, from being irrecoverably engaged to pass a disconsolate eternity in utter darkness and extreme woe? Such is God's will; to such purposes every command, every dispensation of God (how grim, how rough soever it may seem) doth tend. And do we refuse to comply with that good will; do we set against it a will of our own, affecting things unworthy of us, things unprofitable to us, things prejudicial to our best interests, things utterly baneful to our souls? Do we reject the will that would save us, and adhere to a will that would ruin us; a foolish and a senseless will, which, slighting the immense treasures of heaven, the unfading glories of God's kingdom, the ineffable joys of eternity, doth catch at specious nothings, doth pursue mischievous trifles; a shadow of base profit, a smoke of vain honour, a flash of sordid pleasure; which passeth away like *the mirth of fools*, or *the crackling of thorns*, leaving only soot, black and bitter, behind it?

Eccles. vii. 6. But at least ere we do thus, let us consider whose will it is that requireth our compliance.

Ps. cxlviii. It is the will of him, whose will did found the earth, and rear the heaven; whose will sustaineth all things in their existence and operation; whose will is the great law of the world, which universal nature in all its motions doth observe; which reigneth in heaven, the blessed spirits adoring it; which swayeth in hell itself, the cursed fiends trembling at

it: and shall we alone (we pitiful worms crawling on earth) presume to murmur, or dare to kick against it?

It is the will of our Maker, who, together with all our other faculties, did create and confer on us the very power of willing: and shall we turn the work of his hands, the gift of his bounty, against him?

It is the will of our Preserver, who, together with all that we are or have, continually doth uphold our very will itself; so that without employing any positive force, merely by letting us fall out of his hand, he can send us and it back to nothing: and shall our will clash with that, on which it so wholly dependeth; without which it cannot subsist one moment, or move one step forward in action?

It is the will of our sovereign Lord, who, upon various indisputable accounts, hath a just right to govern us, and an absolute power to dispose of us: ought we not therefore to say with old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do to me as it seemeth good to him?*^{Sam. iii. 18.}

Is it not extreme iniquity, is it not monstrous arrogance for us, in derogation to his will, to pretend giving law, or picking a station to ourselves? Do we not manifestly incur high treason against the King of heaven, by so invading his office, usurping his authority, snatching his sceptre into our hands, and setting our wills in his throne?

It is the will of our Judge, from whose mouth our doom must proceed, awarding life or death, weal or woe unto us: and what sentence can we expect, what favour can we pretend to, if we presumptuously shall offend, oppose that will, which is the supreme rule of justice and sole fountain of mercy?

SERM. It is the will of our Redeemer, who hath bought
XXXVI. us with an inestimable price, and with infinite pains
 hath rescued us from miserable captivity under most
 barbarous enemies, that obeying his will we might
 command our own, and serving him we might enjoy
 perfect freedom: and shall we, declining his call and
 conduct out of that unhappy state, bereave him of
 his purchase, frustrate his undertakings, and forfeit
 to ourselves the benefit of so great redemption ?

It is the will of our best Friend; who loveth us
 much better than we do love ourselves; who is con-
 cerned for our welfare, as his own dearest interest,
 and greatly delighteth therein; who, by innumerable
 experiments, hath demonstrated an excess of kind-
 ness to us; who in all his dealings with us purely
 doth aim at our good, never charging any duty on
 us, or dispensing any event to us, so much with in-
 tent to exercise his power over us, as to express
Lam. iii. 33. his goodness towards us; who never *doth afflict or grieve us* more against our will, than against his
 own desire; never indeed but when goodness itself
 calleth for it, and even mercy doth urge thereto; to
 whom we are much obliged, that he vouchsafeth to
 govern and guide us, our service being altogether
 unprofitable to him, his governance exceedingly be-
 neficial to us: and doth not such a will deserve re-
 gard; may it not demand compliance from us? To
 neglect or infringe it, what is it? is it not palpable
 folly, is it not foul disingenuity, is it not detestable
 ingratitude?

So doth every relation of God recommend his will
 to us; and each of his attributes doth no less: for

It is the will of him who is most holy, or whose
 will is essential rectitude: how then can we thwart

it, without being stained with the guilt, and wounded SERM.
with a sense of great irregularity and iniquity? XXXVI.

It is the will of him, who is perfectly just; who therefore cannot but assert his own righteous will, and avenge the violation thereof: is it then advisable to drive him to that point by wilful provocation; or to run upon the edge of necessary severity?

It is the will of him, who is infinitely wise; who therefore doth infallibly know what is best for us, what doth most befit our capacities and circumstances; what in the final result will conduce to our greatest advantage and comfort: shall we then prefer the dreams of our vain mind before the oracles of his wisdom? shall we, forsaking the direction of his unerring will, follow the impulse of our giddy humour?

It is the will of him, who is immensely good and benign; whose will therefore can be no other than good-will to us; who can mean nothing thereby but to derive bounty and mercy on us: can we then fail of doing well, if we put ourselves entirely into his hands? are we not our own greatest enemies, in notwithstanding his gracious intentions?

It is, finally, the will of him, who is uncontrollably powerful; whose will therefore must prevail one way or other; either with our will or against it, either so as to bow and satisfy us, or so as to break and plague us: for, *My counsel, saith he, shall stand, and I Isa. xlvi. 10. will do all my pleasure.* As to his dispensations, we may fret, we may wail, we may bark at them; but we cannot alter or avoid them: sooner may we by our moans check the tides, or by our cries stop the sun in his career, than divert the current of affairs, or change the state of things established by

SERM. God's high decree : what he layeth on, no hand can
XXXVI. remove ; what he hath destined, no power can re-
 verse : our anger therefore will be ineffectual, our
 impatience will have no other fruit, than to aggra-
 gate our guilt and augment our grief.

Dan. v. 23. As to his commands, we may *lift up ourselves against them*, we may fight stoutly, we may in a sort prove conquerors ; but it will be a miserable victory, the trophies whereof shall be erected in hell, and stand upon the ruins of our happiness ; for, while we insult over abused grace, we must fall under incensed justice : if God cannot fairly procure his will of us in way of due obedience, he will surely execute his will upon us in way of righteous vengeance ; if we do not surrender our wills to the overtures of his goodness, we must submit our backs to the strokes of his anger : he must reign over us, if not as over loyal subjects to our comfort, yet as over stubborn rebels to our confusion ; for this in that case will be our doom, and the last words God will design to spend upon us, *Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

Luke xix.
27.

Heb. xiii.
20, 21.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ : to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

S E R M O N XXXVII.

OF CONTENTMENT.

PHIL. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.

'Εγώ γὰρ
τιμωθεὶς εἰς
τοῦτο, αὐτοίς
πολὺς εἴησι.

IN these words, by the example of an eminent SERM. XXXVII. saint, is recommended to us the practice of an excellent duty, or virtue; a practice in itself most worthy, very grateful to God, and immediately of great benefit to ourselves; being indeed necessary towards the comfortable enjoyment of our lives: it is contentedness; the virtue, which, of all other, doth most render this world acceptable, and constituteth a kind of temporal heaven; which he that hath, is thereby *ipso facto* in good measure happy, τὸ δὲ αὐταρ- κτιστήματος, whatever other things he may seem to want; which μητέ μάταιος he that wanteth, doth, however otherwise he be furnished, become miserable, and carrieth a kind of hell αἰχματός τοῦτον τὸν βίον, καὶ αἰχματός οὗτος. within him: it cannot therefore but well deserve Arist. Eth. i. 7. our best study about it, and care to get it; in imitation of St. Paul, who *had learned in whatever state he was, therein to be content.*

In discoursing upon which words, I shall consider two particulars: first, the virtue itself, (contentedness in every state,) the nature of which I shall endeavour to explain; then the way of attaining or

SERM. producing it, implied by St. Paul in the words, *I
XXXVII. have learned.*

*Tὸν εἰδημο-
νεῖν ἀπίχειν
δῆ πάντα ἡ
θέλησι, πε-
πληρωμένη
τὸν λουκίναν
οὐ δύεται δῆ
προσώπου,
οὐδὲ λαμπροῦ.*
Attr. iii. 24. I. For explication of the virtue: the word here expressing it is *αὐτάρκεια*, which signifieth self-sufficiency, or having enough of oneself; the which is not to be understood absolutely, as if he took himself to be independent in nature, able to subsist of himself, not wanting any support or comfort without himself, (for this is the property and privilege of the great *El-shaddai*, who alone subsisteth of himself, needing toward his being and felicity nothing without himself; this is repugnant to the nature of man, who is a creature essentially dependent for his being and subsistence, indigent of many things for his satisfaction and welfare,) but relatively considering his present state, the circumstances wherein he was, and the capacities he had; which by God's disposal and providence were such, that he could not want more than he had in his possession or reach. He meant not to exclude God, and his providence; but rather supposed that as the ground and cause of his self-sufficiency; according as otherwhere he express-
2 Cor. iii. 5. eth it: *Not as if we were sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God:* nor did he intend to exclude the need of other creatures otherwise than as considered without his possession, or beyond his power; but he meaneth only, that he did not desire or lack more than what God had supplied him with; had put into his hand, or had set within his reach; that his will did suit to his state, his desire did not exceed his power.

This is the meaning of the word which the apostle useth: but for the more full and clear understanding the virtue itself, we shall first consider

the object, about which it is conversant ; then the SERM. several acts, which it requireth, or wherein the exercise thereof consisteth. XXXVII.

1. The object of contentedness is the present state of things, whatever it be, (whether prosperous or adverse, of eminency or meanness, of abundance or scantness,) wherein by divine Providence we are set: *τὰ ἐν οἷς ἐσμὲν, the things in which we are*; that is, our present condition, with all its circumstances: so it may be generally supposed, considering that it is ordinary, and almost natural for men (who have not learned as St. Paul had done, or are not instructed and exercised in the practice of this duty) to be dissatisfied and disquieted in every state; to be always in want of something; to find defects in every fortune; to fancy they may be in better case, and to desire it earnestly: if we estimate things wisely, rich men are more liable to discontent than poor men. It is observable, that prosperity is a peevish thing, and men of highest fortune are apt most easily to resent the smallest things: a little neglect, a slight word, an unpleasing look doth affect them more than reproaches, blows, wrongs do those of a mean condition.

Prosperity is a nice and squeamish thing, and it is hard to find any thing able to please men of a full and prosperous state, which being uncapable of bettering in substantial things, they can hardly find matter of solid delight. Whereas a poor estate is easily comforted by the accession of many things which it wanteth: a good meal, a small gift, a little gain, or good success of his labour doth greatly please a poor man with a very solid pleasure: but a rich man hath nothing to please him, but a new toy, a

SERM. puff of applause, success at a horse-race, at bowls, at
XXXVII. hunting; in some petty sport and pastime, which
 can yield but a very thin and transitory satisfaction
 to any man not quite brutified and void of sense:
 whence contentedness hath place, and is needful in
 every condition, be it in appearance never so pros-
Job xx. 22. Chrys. tom. vii. p. 68. perous, so plentiful, so pleasant. *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.*

The formal object thereof may indeed seem to be a condition distasteful to our sense, or cross to our fancy; an adverse or strait condition; a condition of poverty, of disgrace, of any great inconvenience or distress incident to us in this world; but since the most men are absolutely in such a condition, exposed to so many wants and troubles; since many more are needy comparatively, wanting the conveniences that others enjoy, and which themselves affect; since there are few, who in right estimation are not indigent and poor, that is, who do not desire and fancy themselves to want many things which they have not, (for wealth consisteth not so much in the possession of goods, as in apprehension of freedom from want, and in satisfaction of desires,) since care, trouble, disappointment, satiety, and discontent following them, do not only haunt cottages, and stick to the lowest sort of people, but do even frequent palaces, and pursue men of highest rank; therefore any state may be the object of contentedness; and the duty is of a very general concernment; princes themselves need to learn it; the lessons teaching it, and the arguments persuading it, may as well suit the rich and noble, as the poor and the peasant; so our apostle himself doth intimate in the

Phil. iv. 12. words immediately following our text: *I know both*

how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things I am instructed both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need: he had the art, not only to manage well both conditions, but to be satisfied in either.

But seeing real adversity, poverty, and disgrace have naturally the strongest influence in disturbing and disordering our minds; that contentedness is plainly most needful in such cases, as the proper support, or medicine of our mind in them; that other states do need it only as they, by fancy or infirmity, do symbolize or conspire with these; therefore unto persons in these states we shall more explicitly apply our directions and persuasions, as to the proper and primary subjects of contentedness; the which by analogy, or parity of reason, may be extended to all others, who, by imaginary wants and distresses, do create displeasure to themselves. So much for the object, or the subject, of the virtue.

2. The acts, wherein the practice thereof consisteth, (which are necessary ingredients, or constant symptoms of it,) belong either to the mind and understanding, or to the will and appetite, or to external demeanour and practice; being, 1. right opinions and judgments of mind; 2. fit dispositions and affections of heart; 3. outward good actions and behaviours, in regard to our condition and the events befalling us; the former being as the root and stock, the latter as the fruits and the flowers of the duty: unto which may be reduced the correspondent negations, or absence of bad judgments, affections, and deportments in respect to the same objects.

SERM. (1.) As to our opinions and judgments of things,
XXXVII. contentedness requireth, that,

1. We should believe our condition, whatever it be, to be determined by God; and that all events befalling us do proceed from him; at least that he permitteth and ordereth them, according to his judgment

Soph. Aj. and pleasure; Ξὺν τῷ Θεῷ πᾶς καὶ γελᾷ κωδύρεται, all, as
 Lor. Lam. iii. 38. the prophet singeth, *both good and evil, proceedeth*
 Amos iii. 6.
1 Kings xii. 15. 24. *out of the mouth of the Most High*; that affliction, as Job said, *cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground*; as a thing arising spontaneously, or sowed by the hand of some creature; but rather descendeth from him, who saith,

Isa. xlvi. 7. *I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.*

We are apt, when any thing falleth out unpleasant to us, to exclaim against fortune, and to accuse our stars; or to inveigh against the second causes which immediately offend us, ascribing all to their influence; which proceeding doth argue in us a heathenish ignorance and infidelity, or at least much inconsiderateness, and impotency of mind; that our judgment is blinded and clouded, or perverted and seduced by ill passions; for that in truth there is not in the world any occurrence merely fortuitous or fatal, (all being guided and wielded by the powerful hand of the all-wise and almighty God,) there is no creature which in its agency doth not depend upon God, as the instrument of his will, or subordinate thereto; wherefore upon every event we should, raising our minds above all other causes, discern and acknowledge God's

2 Sam. xvi. 10. hand; as David did, when Shimei cursed him; *Let him, said the good king, curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David;* as Job did, when

Atque
Deos, atque
astra vocat
crudelia
mater.

He was rifled of his goods, *The Lord*, said he, *gave*, SERM. xxxvii.
and the Lord hath taken away; as our Saviour did, when, in regard to the sore hardships he was design-^{Job i. 21.}
ed to undergo, he said, *The cup which my Father John xviii.
 hath given me, shall I not drink?*^{11.}

2. Hence we should always judge every thing which happeneth to be thoroughly good and fit, worthy (all things considered) to be appointed, or permitted by that Governor of things; not entertaining any harsh thoughts of God, as if he were not enough wise, just, or benign in ordering us to be afflicted or crossed; but taking all occurrences to be well consistent with all God's holy perfections and attributes^a.

We are apt to conceit that the world is ill ordered, when we do not thrive and prosper therein; that every thing is irregular which squareth not to the models of our fancy; that things had gone much better if our designs had found success: but these are vain and perverse conceits; for that certainly is most good which seemeth good to God^b; his will is a perfect standard of right and convenience, his eye never aimeth wrong, his hand never faileth to hit the mark of what is best; *All his paths are mercy and Ps. xxv. 10.
 truth; he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in cxlv. 17.
 all his works*; so did king Hezekiah rightly judge, when, upon denunciation of a sad doom to his country and posterity, he replied to the prophet; *Good Kings xx.
 19.*

^a Παραχωρήσωμεν τοίνυν παρακάλψ τῷ σοφῷ τοῦ παντὸς κυβερνῆτη,
 οὐδὲ στέρξαμεν τὰ οἰκονομήμενα, ὅποια ποτ' ἀνὴρ καὶ θυμέρη, καὶ λυπηρά,
 &c. Theod. Ep. 136.

^b Placeat homini quicquid Deo placuit. Sen. Ep. 75.

Στέργειν γάρ τὰ παρὰ τῆς ἀρρέτου σοφίας πριτανεύμενα, καὶ ταῦτα
 τάντας νομίζειν συμφέροντα. Theod. Ep. 15.

Οἶδε γάρ ὁσιός τὸ συμφέρον, καὶ ὁσιός ἀγαθὸς τοῦτο ἡμῖν πραγματεύ-
 ται. Id. Ep. 18.

SERM. *is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken;*
XXXVII. so even the pagan sage discerned, when he thus rebuked a malecontent; *You slave, do you forsake desire any thing, but what is best? and is not that only best, which seemeth best to God?*

3. We should even be satisfied in our mind, that, according to God's purpose, all events do tend and conduce to our particular welfare; being not only good to us as members of the world, and in order to more general ends, but serving towards our private benefit and advantage. We may be ready perhaps to confess, that whatever happeneth may be indeed just and fit in some distant and occult respects; but hardly can we be induced to allow, that what we feel offensive to our sense and fancy is really good for us, or was meant for our benefit; we cannot easily discern any thing of love or favour in such matters:

Job v. 17. those sort of aphorisms, in holy scripture, *Happy is James i. 12. the man whom God correcteth; As many as I love,*
Rev. iii. 19. Prov. iii. 12. I rebuke and chasten; sound strangely, and are huge paradoxes to us; such is our blindness of mind, and dulness of apprehension: but God knoweth with so exact a skilfulness to manage things, that every particular occurrence shall be advantageous to the person whom it toucheth; and accordingly to each one he dispensemeth that which is most suitable to him; whence, as frequently it is necessary for our good that we should be crossed, (for that indeed otherwise we should often much harm, sometimes we should quite undo ourselves,) so it always, when God so ordereth it, is to be deemed most profitable and wholesome for us: we are therefore in reason obliged to

^c Ἀνδράποδων, ἄλλο γὰρ θέλεις, οὐ τὸ ἀμείνον; ἄλλο οὖν τις ἀμείνον, οὐ τὸ θεῷ δοκοῦν; *Agg. xi. 7.*

take the saddest accidents and sharpest afflictions, SERM.
coming upon us by Providence, to be no other than XXXVII.
fatherly corrections, or friendly rebukes, designed to
render us good and happy; as arguments therefore
and instances of especial good-will toward us; con-
ceiving under every dispensation that we do, as it
were, hear God speaking to us, as he did to those in
the prophet; *I know the thoughts, that I think to-^{Jer. xxix.}
ward you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to^{11.}
give you an expected end.*

4. Hence we are to believe, that our present con-
dition (whatever it be to carnal or worldly sense) is
in right judgment, all things considered, the best;
most proper, most desirable for us; better than we, if
it were at our discretion and choice, should put our-
selves into: for that God (*the Saviour of all men,*^{1 Tim. ii. 4.}
who desireth that no man should perish; who ^{Ezek.}
is^{2 Pet. iii. 11.}
good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all^{2 Pet. iii. 9.}
his works; who exceedingly tendereth the welfare of
his children and subjects) doth ever (here in this life,
the time of merit and trial) with a most wise good-
will design our best good; and by the most proper
methods (such as do best suit our circumstances and
capacities) doth aim to draw us unto happiness; and
accordingly doth assign a station for us most befitting
in order to that great end: we therefore should
think ourselves well placed, because we are where
God doth set us; that we have enough, because we
have what God allotteth us.

There are other more particular judgments, which
contentedness involveth, or which are required to-
ward it; such as these: that nothing originally is
due to us, but all cometh purely from divine favour
and bounty; that all adversities are justly and de-

S E R M. servedly inflicted on us, as the due wages, or natural
XXXVII. fruits of our sins; that our happiness dependeth not
on any present enjoyments or possessions, but may
well subsist without them; that a competency (or so
much as sufficeth to maintain our life without intoler-
able pain) ought to satisfy our desires: but these and
the like judgments will come opportunely to be con-
sidered as motives to the practice of the duty.

(2.) From such acts of our mind, or intellective part, concerning things incident to us, should proceed the following dispositions of will and affection.

1. We should entertain all occurrences, how grievous soever to us, with entire submission, and resignation of our will to the will of God; wholly acquiescing in his good pleasure; saying in our hearts
Luke xxii. after our Lord, *Let not my will, but thine be done;*
42.
1 Sam. iii. with good Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what*
18.
2 Sam. xv. *seemeth him good;* with David, *Behold here I am,*
26. *let him do to me as seemeth good to him;* even with Socrates, *If so it pleaseth God, so let it be^c;* with Epictetus, *I always chiefly will that which cometh to pass; for I account that better which God will-eth, than what I will myself; I will adhere as a minister and follower to him, I pursue, I affect, I simply will with him^d:* looking upon them as sent from God, we should heartily bid them welcome, we should kindly embrace them, we should use them

M. Anton. with all fair respect: *ἀσπάζεσθαι τὰ συμβαίνοντα, (to hug,*
3. 4. 2. 17. *or kindly to embrace things incident,) φιλεῖν τὰ ἀπο-*
10. 11. 12. *νεμόμενα, (to love things dispensed by Providence,)*

^c Εἰ ταύτη θεοῖς φίλοι, ταύτη γενέσθω.

^d Ἀεὶ μᾶλλον θέλω τὸ γινόμενον κρείττον γὰρ ἡγοῦμαι, ὃ ὁ Θεὸς θέλει, ἥ
ἐγώ προσκείσομαι διάκονος καὶ ἀκόλουθος ἐκείνῳ, συνορμᾶ, ὀρέγομαι, ἀπλές
συνθέλω. *Act. iii. 7.*

are precepts, which even as dictated by natural reason SERM.
philosophers do much inculcate. XXXVII.

This excludeth all rebellious insurrection, and swellings of mind against Providence, such as argue that we dislike God's government; that, were we able, we should struggle with God's will; that we gladly would shake off his yoke; all such ill resentment and repining at our lot, which maketh God's hand grievous, and his yoke uneasy to us; such affections as the Wise Man toucheth, when he saith, *The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.* Prov. xix. 3.

2. We should bear all things with steady calmness and composedness of mind, suppressing or quelling those tumults, those storms, those excesses of passion, which the sense of things disgusting is apt to excite; such as are immoderate grief, fierce anger, Let no man be moved by these afflictions; irksome despair, and the like. No adversity should so ruffle our minds, as to defeat or pervert the use of *μηδένα επι-νοεῖν* (i.e. our reason, so as to hinder us from perceiving or *θεωρεῖν* performing what becometh us, so as to engage us *θεογονίας.* Chrys.) ^{1 Thess. iii. 3.} into any irregular or unseemly behaviour.

3. We should indeed bear the worst events with an *εὐθυγάτια*, that is, with a sweet and cheerful disposition of mind, so as not to be put out of humour; not to be dejected or quite discouraged by them^c, not to fall into that *heaviness*, which, as the Wise Prov. xii. Man saith, *maketh the heart of man to stoop*; but ^{22.} rather finding delight and complacence in them, as considering whence they come, whither they aim and tend: such was the disposition and demeanour of the apostles and primitive good Christians in the midst of their most grievous adversities and suffer-

^c Ἡ κατὰ κόσμον λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται. 2 Cor. vii. 10.

SERM. ings^f; *they rejoiced, &c. they did take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, they did account it all joy*
 XXXVII. *when they fell into divers tribulations:* they were,
 Acts v. 41. Heb. x. 34. James i. 2. ὡς λυπούμενοι, ᾧ δὲ χαίροντες, *as grieved, but always rejoicing;* their state was grievous, but their heart was constantly cheerful. Such a constant frame of mind we should maintain, so continually prepared we should be against all contingencies, that nothing should happen amiss to us, so as deeply to affect us, or to unsettle us in our humour; that every thing from God's hand should be acceptable; that no sadness may seize on us, at least that we do not indulge or cherish it; that in nowise we suffer any regret to quench that spiritual comfort and joy in God, which
 Psal. xxxiii. *becometh the upright,* as the Psalmist saith, and
 1. xvii. 12. Phil. iv. 4. which we are so often enjoined perpetually to main-
 iii. 1. 2 Cor. xiii. *tain, as in all cases, so particularly under afflictions and trials.* We cannot indeed hardly be content, if we are not cheerful; for it is hard to be altogether on the suffering and bearing hand, without any pleasure: the mind can hardly stand in a poise, so as neither to sorrow or joy; we cannot digest adversity, if we do not relish it; we shall not submit to it as his will, if we do not take it for an argument of his
 11. 1 Pet. iv. 13. love: εὐδοκῶ, I, saith St. Paul, *have a liking or pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

4. We should with faith and hope rely and wait on God for the removal or easement of our afflictions; or, however, we should confide in him for

^f Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ἀσθενείαις, ἐν ἔθρεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις ἵστη
Χριστοῦ. 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

^g Εἰς πᾶσαν ἵπομονὴν, καὶ μακροθυμίαν μετὰ χαρᾶς. Col. i. 11.

grace, and strength to support them well : as our SERM.
 Saviour did, when he prayed, *Father, if thou be* XXXVII.
willing, remove this cup ; as they did in the pro-
 phet, who said, *In the way of thy judgments, O* <sup>Luke xxii.
42.</sup> Isa. xxvi. 8.
Lord, we have waited on thee ; according to that
 rule in the Lamentations, *It is good that a man* ^{Lam. iii. 26.}
should both hope, and wait quietly for the salva-
tion of the Lord ; and those precepts in the Psalms,
Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him ; wait ^{Psal.}
upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall ^{xxxvii. 7.} xvii. 14.
strengthen thine heart. ^{xli. 1.} ^{xxxiii. 20.} ^{bxxii. 1. xxv.}

We should in any case be ready with the holy ^{3. lxix. 6.}
 Psalmist thus to interrogate and sustain ourselves : ^{xvi. 8.}
Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou ^{Psal. xlii. 5.}
so disquieted within me ? Hope thou in God ; for I
shall yet praise him, for the help of his countenance.

Remembering and considering, (that as we are
 expressly taught in scripture, and as all our reli- ^{2 Pet. iii. 3.}
 gion doth clearly suppose) *God knoweth to rescue* ^{1 Pet. v. 7.} Matt. vi. 35.
the godly out of tribulation ; (he knoweth the proper
 season, when it is fit to do it;) that *he is faithful,* ^{1 Cor. x. 13.}
and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we
are able ; but will with the temptation also make a
way to escape, that we may be able to bear it ; re-
 flecting, I say, on these certain points of Christian
 truth, we should never *sorrow as those who are* <sup>: Thess. iv.
13.</sup>
without hope ; we should never despair of a good ^{Isa. xl. 31.}
 riddance from our adversity, when it shall be season-
 able or beneficial for us; we should always be assured ^{Mic. vii. 7.}
 of a comfortable support under it, which is usually
 better than deliverance from it; our minds should
 never sink into despondency or disconsolateness :
 that this is practicable in the worst case, we have
 conspicuous instances to assure us ; it hath been the

SERM. practice of most illustrious and excellent persons,
XXXVII. particularly of the holy apostles ; never was any condition, in outward respects and appearance, more forlorn and dismal than was theirs ; yet it nowise be-
^{2 Cor. iv. 8.} reaved them of hope or courage : *We, they could*
^{1 Cor. iv. 11.} say, *are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*

5. We should indeed not so much as faint or languish in our minds upon any such occasion ; no adversity should impair the forces of our reason or our spirit ; should enervate our courage, or slacken our industry ; should render us sick, or weak in heart ;

^{Prov. xxiv.} for, *If, saith the Wise Man, thou faint in the day*
^{10.} *of adversity, thy strength is small,* (it is the sign of
^{2 Cor. iv. 16.} *Rev. ii. 3.* an infirm mind,) and, *μὴ ἔκκακεῖν, not to falter or de-*
^{2 Thess. iii. 13.} *cay, μὴ ἐκλύεσθαι, not to be dissolved,* or disjointed, in
^{Gal. vi. 9.} *Heb. xii. 3.* *our souls,* (as the body is in scorbutic distempers,) are
^{nunc a-} *nimiris opus* rules prescribed to us in such cases : we do then in-
^{nunc} *pectore fir-* deed need a firm and robust constitution of soul ; we
^{mo.} should then bear up most resolutely and stoutly :
 the encouragement of Moses to the people, entering
 upon battle, may well be accommodated to us, in re-
^{Deut. xx. 3.} *gard to our conflict with adversities ; Let not your*
hearts faint, fear not and do not tremble, neither be
ye terrified because of them.

6. We should not be weary of our condition, or have irksome longings for alteration ; but, with a quiet indifference and willingness of mind, lie under it during God's pleasure ; according to the Wise ^{Prov. iii. 11.} Man's advice ; *My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction ;* and that of the apostle, enforced by our Lord's ex-
^{Heb. xii. 3.} ample ; *Consider him that endured such contra-*

diction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. We should not think SERM.
XXXVII. God slow, or his time long and tedious, as if he were forgetful of us, or backward to succour us; as the Psalmist was inclined to do, when in the day of trouble he brake forth into these conceits and expressions: *Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever, doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* Thus he in a sad mood was apt to think and speak; but, recollecting himself, he perceived it was his error, and confessed it was his fault thus to imagine; *I said, it was mine infirmity;* and it will be ours likewise, if we entertain such conceptions and resentments: we should with the same mind endure our present state, as we do pass through a hard winter, or a time of foul weather, taking it for seasonable and fit, because the wise Author of nature hath so appointed and ordered it.

7. We should by adverse accidents be rendered lowly in our own eyes, and sober in our conceits of ourselves; meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of spirit; sensible of our unworthiness and meanness, of our natural frailty, penury, and misery, of our actual offences and miscarriages; deeply affected in regard to the awful majesty and power, to the perfect holiness and strict justice of God; they should quell our haughty stomach, they should supple our stiff wilfulness, they should soften our hard hearts, they should mitigate our peevish humours: to effect these things is usually the design of such accidents, and it is

SERM. ever the best fruit of them : this is that which St. XXXVII. Peter adviseth to, when he saith, *Be humbled*
1 Pet. v. 6. *under the mighty hand of God*; which God approveth, and encourageth with a gracious promise,
Isa. lxvi. 2. when he saith, *To this man will I look, even to him, that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word*: this disposition is an inseparable adherent to contentedness ; he that hath not his spirit thus broken, or mollified, will hardly be content in any state ; he that is haughty in conceit, and sturdy in humour, will every where find that which will cross and disturb him.

8. It is required that we should, notwithstanding any meanness, any hardness of our condition, be meekly and kindly affected toward others, being satisfied and pleased with their more prosperous states. We should not be angry with the world, because we do not thrive or flourish in it ; we should not be sullen or peevish toward any man, because his fortune is better than ours ; we should not repine or grudge at the good success of any of our brethren, because we want the like ourselves ; *we should rather rejoice with those that rejoice* ; innocently filching some pleasure from them, or borrowing some satisfaction from their enjoyments. It is *human* thus to do, because of the natural cognition and friendship of men ; it is more especially *Christian*, because of our spiritual consanguinity ; by virtue whereof we are so knit together, and made *members each to other*, that *if*, as St. Paul telleth us, *one*

Rom. xii.

15.

Rom. xii.

15.

1 Cor. xii.

26.

^g Ita plerumque contingit, ut dum aliquos fratres nostros in quantulacunque requie constitutos in mediis nostris anxietatibus cogitamus, non parva ex parte recreemur, tanquam et nos ideo ipsi quietius, tranquilliusque vivamus. *Aug. Ep. 144.*

*member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; and SERM.
one member be honoured, all the members should* XXXVII.
*joyce with it : we can hardly be content without
us appropriating the goods, and sharing in the de-
bts of others ; he can never be content, who look-
eth with an evil eye upon other men's prosperity ; he
cannot do well himself who loveth not to see his
ighbour do well ; numberless occasions will happen
discompose and vex him.*

Adversity impatiently borne is apt to sour our
irits, and render us foward toward men ; espe-
cially when it proceedeth from the unkindness, in-
atitude, or treachery of friends, or of persons obliged
us for our good-will, or for benefits done to them :
it nothing should render us unkindly disposed to-
ward the world, nothing should extinguish charity
us toward any man ; so plain reason teacheth us,
great examples enforce : Moses did not lose his
fection towards his countrymen, because he was by
one of them threatened away into banishment and
grancy ; the apostles became not disaffected to the
orld, because it misused and persecuted them ; our
ord did continue most earnestly to desire, and la-
boriously to endeavour the good of those who most
espitefully used him : like theirs, in all cases, should
ir disposition be ; we should ever observe the Psalm-
's advice ; *Cease from anger, forsake wrath, fret* ^{Ps. xxxvii.}_{8.}
it thyself in anywise to do evil.

9. Again ; Contentedness doth imply a freedom
om all solicitude and anxiety of mind, in reference
to provision for our needs, and conveniences of life ;
according to those rules and precepts of *casting our* ^{1 Pet. v. 7.}
burden and care upon the Lord, of being careful ^{Ps. xxxvii.}_{5. lv. 23.}
for nothing, but commanding our affairs to God's ^{Phil. iv. 6.}

SERM. ordering; according to that most comfortable pre-
XXXVII. cept of our Lord, *Take no care, saying, What shall
 Matt.vi.31. we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, How shall
 we be clothed? for your heavenly Father knoweth
 that ye want all these things.* If we do not thus,
 it is hardly possible that we should be content; if we
 do not depend upon Providence, we cannot escape
 being often distracted with care, and perplexed with
 fear; we cannot cheerfully hope for any thing we
 need, nor be quietly secure of any thing we possess.

10. It requireth also that we should curb our de-
 sires, and confine them in the narrowest bounds we
 can; so as not to affect more in quantity, or better
 in quality, than our nature and state do require^b: if
 we must have superfluities, if we can only relish
 dainties, we shall never be pleased; for as nature
 hath limits, and is content with little; as there is no
 state in this world, the exigencies whereof may not
 be answered with a competence; so curiosity is an
 infinite and insatiable thing: *He that loveth plea-
 Prov. xxii. 17. sure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and
 oil shall not be rich;* that is, he which is curious
 and nice in his desires will never have enoughⁱ: the
 rule, which, according to St. Paul, should regulate
^{1 Tim. vi. 8.} our desires, is this; *Having food and raiment, let
 us with them be satisfied:* if this will satisfy us, we
 may easily obtain satisfaction^k: a moderate industry,
 with God's blessing, will procure so much; God hath

^b Ἡδιστα τολυτελείας ἀπολαύουσιν οἱ ἡκιστα ταῦτης δεόμενοι. Epic. ad Menœc.

Ventre nihil novi frugalius. *Juv. Sat.* v. 6.

ⁱ Αἱ κατὰ φύσιν δρέπεις αὐταρκεῖα περιορίζεται. Cl. Alex. *Pæd.* ii.

^k Si ad naturam vives nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem,
 nunquam dives. *Epic. Sen. Ep.* 16.

promised to bestow it ; if this will not suffice, there is S E R M. no sure way of getting or keeping more: as God is no-
wise obliged to provide us superfluities, or concerned
to relieve our extravagant longings ; so we may fear
that Providence will be ready to cross us in our cares
and endeavours tending to those purposes ; so that we
shall be disappointed in the procurement, or disturbed
in the fruition of such needless things. However,
he that is most scant in his desires, is likely to be
most content in his mind : *He, as Socrates said,* *is oīax/rrw,*
diēμoīs, iγ-
γyvra ðiān.
Socr. in Xe-
noph. A-
pomn. iii.

In fine, contentedness doth import, that, whatever
our condition is, our minds and affections should be
modelled and squared just according to it; so that
our inclinations be compliant, our desires be congruous
thereto ; so that easily we can comport with the
inconveniences, can relish the comforts, can improve
the advantages sticking thereto ; otherwise, like an
ill-made garment, it will sit unhandsome upon us,
and be troublesome to us. It is not usually our con-
dition itself, but the unsuitableness thereof to our
disposition and desires, (which soureth all its sweets,
and rendereth its advantages fruitless,) that createth
discontent ; for, although it be very mean, others
bear the same cheerfully; many would be glad there-
of: if therefore we will be content, we must bend
our inclinations, and adapt our desires to a corre-
spondence with our state.

If we are rich, we should get a large and bountiful heart, otherwise our wealth will hang loose about us ; the care and trouble in keeping it, the suspicion and fear of losing it, the desire of amplifying it, the unwillingness to spend or use it, will bereave us of

SERM. all true satisfaction therein, and render it no less
XXXVII. unsavoury to us, than unprofitable to others.

If we are poor, we should have a frugal, provident, industrious mind, sparing in desires, free from curiosity, willing to take pains, able to digest hardships; otherwise the straitness of our condition will pinch and gall us.

Are we high in dignity or reputation? we then need a mind well ballasted with sober thoughts, otherwise the wind of vanity will drive us into absurd behaviours, thence will dash us upon disappointments, and consequently will plunge us into vexation and discontent.

Are we mean and low? we need a meek and lowly, a calm and steady spirit; not affecting little respects, or resenting the want of them; apt to pass over or to bear quietly petty affronts and neglects; not apt to be moved by words signifying contempt or disdain; else (being fretted with such things, which in this ill-natured and hard-hearted world we may be sure often to meet with) we shall be uneasy in our minds, and impatiently wish a change of our state.

These and the like dispositions and affections of soul this duty containeth or requireth: from hence should arise a correspondent external demeanour, and such actions as these which follow:

1. We should restrain our tongues from all unseemly and unsavoury expressions, implying dissatisfaction in God's proceedings, or displeasure at his providence; arguing desperation or distrust in God; such as were those of the discontented and impatient

^{Ps. lxxviii.} Israelites; *They, saith the Psalmist, spake against*
^{19.}
^{Num. xxi.} *God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the*
^{5.} *wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the*

waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed ; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people ? Such as they used, of whom the prophet saith, When they shall be hungry, they will fret Isa. iii. 21. themselves, and curse their King and their God ; as those in the Apocalypse, who, being afflicted with deserved judgments, did blaspheme the name of God, Rev. xvi. 9, which had power over those plagues—blasphemed^{11, 21.} the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores. Into such profane enormities of language is discontent apt to break forth, questioning the power of God, or his willingness to succour us ; venting wrath and displeasure toward him ; charging him foolishly with injustice, or with unkindness, or with negligence, or with impotency ; the abstaining from which behaviour, under the sense of his bitter calamities, is a great commendation of Job ; In all this, it is said, Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly !

2. We should indeed forbear any the least complaint or murmuring, in regard to the dispensations of Providence ; or upon dissatisfaction in the state allotted us : St. Jude saith, that God in the last day will come, to execute judgment, and to convince men Jude 15, 16. of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him : these, subjoineth he, are γογγυσταὶ μεμψίμοιροι, murmurers, that complain of their lot ; which signifieth the heinousness and extreme dangerousness of this practice. Wherefore Lam.iii.39. doth the living man complain ? is the prophet's question, implying it to be an unreasonable and blameable practice. Wherefore the advice of David is good ; to

¹ Job i. 22. Οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀφροσύνην τῷ Θεῷ.

'Αλλ' ἔχε σιγῆ μήθον, ἐπίτρεψον δὲ θεῖσις. Hom. Od. T.

S E R M. suppress all complaint, to be still and silent in such
XXXVII. cases : *Be still, saith he, and know that I am God;*
Psal. xlvi. and, *Be silent to the Lord* ; the which precepts his
10. iv. 4. practice may seem well to interpret and back ; *I*
xxxvii. 7. *was, saith he, dumb ; I opened not my mouth, be-*
xxxix. 9. *cause it was thy doing^m :* and accordingly Job,
Job xi. 4. *Behold,* (said he, after having considered all the
Isa. liii. 7. reasons he could imagine of God's proceedings,) *I*
am vile ; what shall I answer thee ? I will lay my
hand upon my mouth. And thus our Saviour, when
he was oppressed and afflicted, opened not his
mouth.

Psal. cxix. 75. 3. Yea it is our duty, in these cases, to spend our breath in declaring our satisfaction in God's dealing with usⁿ; acknowledging his wisdom, justice, and goodness therein; blessing and praising him for all that hath befallen us; each of us confessing after David, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*; imitating Job, who, upon the loss of all his goods, did say no more than this; *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Jer. v. 5. 4. We should abstain from all irregular, unlawful, and unworthy courses toward the removal or remedy of our needs or crosses, choosing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve or relax ourselves; rather bearing patiently than violently, like those in the prophet, *breaking our yoke, and bursting*

^m σιωπῇ

Πάσχειν ἄλγεα πολλὰ βίᾳς ὑποδέγμενος ἀνθρῶν. Od. E.

ⁿ Δέξα τῷ Θεῷ πάντων ἔνεκεν. Οὐ γὰρ παύσομαι τοῦτο ἐπιλέγεν τεὶς τεῖς μοι τοῖς συμβαίνουσι. Chrys. ad Olymp. Ep. 11.

our bands. Take heed, regard not iniquity ; for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction. We SERM. XXXVII. should rather continue poor, than by cozenage or Job xxxvi. 21. rapine endeavour to raise our fortune ; we should rather lie under disgrace and contempt, than by sinful or sordid compliances strive to acquire the respect and favour of men ; we should rather willingly rest in the lowest condition, than do as those, who, by disturbing the world, by fomenting disorders and factious, by supplanting their neighbour's welfare, by venting slanders and detractions, do labour to amplify their estate : we should rather endure any inconvenience or distress, than have recourse to ways of evading them disallowed by God ; doing as the Jews did, who in their straits, against the declared pleasure of God, *set their faces toward* Jer. xlii. 15. Egypt, strengthened themselves in the strength of Isa. xxx. 2. Pharaoh, trusted in the staff of that broken reed. xxxvi. 6. In neglect or diffidence toward God, to embrace such aids, is, as God in the prophet declareth, a very blameable and mischievous folly : *Ephraim, saith he, is* Hos. vii. 11. *like a silly dove without heart ; they call to Egypt,* ^{13.} *they go to Assyria—Woe unto them, for they have fled from me ; destruction unto them, because they have transgressed against me.* We may consider how St. Paul reproveth the Corinthians for seeking a redress of wrong, scandalous and dishonourable to the church : *Now, therefore, it is utterly a fault* Cor. vi. 7. *among you, that ye go to law one with another ; Why do ye not rather take wrong ? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded ? Even to right ourselves in a way whereby any dishonour may come to God, or damage to his church, is not to be approved ; and better it is, in the apostle's judgment,*

SERM. to bear any injury or damage ourselves : *Better*
XXXVII. *it is*, saith St. Peter, *if the will of God be so, that*
^{1 Pet. iii. 17.} *we suffer for well doing, than to do ill.* And, *Let*
^{iv. 19.} *them, who suffer according to the will of God, com-*
mit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing,
as unto a faithful Creator, is another wholesome
 advice of that great apostle.

5. We should, notwithstanding any adversity, proceed in our affairs (such as God requireth, or reason putteth us upon) with alacrity, courage, and industry ; performing however, so far as our circumstances do permit, what is good and fit for us : no disappointment or cross, no straits or grievances of condition, should render us listless or lazy, but rather it should quicken and inflame our activity ; this being a good way to divert us from the sense of our misfortunes, and to comfort us under their pressure ; as also the readiest way to remove or to abate them, τὸ παρὸν εὐθέσθαι, *to order the present well*, whatever it be^o; to make the best of a bad matter, to march forward whither reason calls, how difficultly soever, or slowly it be, in a rough or dirty way ; not to yield to difficulties, but resolutely to encounter them, to struggle lustily with them, to endeavour with all our might to surmount them^p ; are acts worthy of a manly reason and courage : to direct ill accidents to good ends, and improve them to honest uses, is the work of a noble virtue. If a bad game be dealt us, we should not presently throw up, but play it out so well as we can ; so perhaps we may save somewhat, we shall at least be busy till a

^o Κερδαντέον τὸ παρὸν σὺν εὐλογιστίᾳ. Ant. iv. 26. vi. 2.

Τὸ παρὸν ἀπενθύνει πρὸς ὁσιότητα καὶ δικαιοσύνην. Id. xii. 1.

^p Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.

better come. *Put thy trust in the Lord, and be SERM.
doing good,* is the Psalmist's advice in such a case ; _____
and it is a practice necessary to the procuring and ^{XXXVII.}
^{3.} maintaining content ; if we be not otherwise well
employed, we shall be apt, in our thoughts, to me-
lancholize, and dote upon our mischances, the sense
of them will fasten upon our spirits, and gnaw our
hearts.

6. We should behave ourselves fairly and kindly toward the instruments and abettors of our adversity; toward those who brought us into it, and those who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, and those who forbear to afford the succour we might expect; forbearing to express any wrath or displeasure, to exercise any revenge or enmity toward them ; but rather, even upon that score, bearing good-will, and expressing kindness toward them ; not only as to our brethren, whom, according to the general law of charity, we are bound to love, but as to the servants of God in this particular case, and the instruments of his pleasure toward us ; considering, that by maligning or molesting them, we do express ill resentments of God's dealing with us, and, in effect, through their sides, do wound his providence : thus did the good king behave himself toward Shimei, when he was bitterly reproached and cursed by him ; not suffering (upon this account, because he was God's instrument of afflicting himself) that any harm should be done unto him : thus the holy apostles *being reviled, did bless ; being de-* ^{2 Sam. xvi.} *famed, did entreat :* thus our Lord demeaned him- ^{7. Cor. iv.} self toward his spiteful adversaries ; who, *when he* ^{12, 13. 1 Pet. ii. 13.} *was reviled, did not revile again ; when he suf-* ^{iii. 9.} *fered, he did not threaten ; but committed it to him*

SERM. *that judgeth righteously.* In all these cases we
XXXVII. should at least observe the rules and advices of the
Prov. xxiv. Wise Man : *Say not, I will do so to him as he hath*
^{29. xx. 22.} *done to me, I will render to the man according to*
his work; say thou not, I will recompense evil;
but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.

Discontent usually consisteth not so much in displeasure for the things we suffer, as at the persons who bring them on us, or who do not help to rid us from them ; it is their presumed injury or discourtesy which we do fret at : such passions therefore toward men being discarded, our evils presently will become supportable, and content easily will ensue. As men in any sickness or pain, if their friends are about them, affording comfort or assistance, do not seem to feel any thing, and forbear complaining ; so, if the world about us doth please us, if we bear no disaffection or grudge toward any person in view, our adversity will appear less grievous, it will indeed commonly be scarce sensible to us.

In these and such like acts the duty and virtue of contentedness doth especially reside ; or it is employed and exercised by them : and so much may suffice for the explication of its nature. I come now to consider the way of attaining it, intimated by St. Paul here, when he saith, *I have learned.*

SERMON XXXVIII.

OF CONTENTMENT.

PHIL. iv. 11.

I have learned, &c.

THESE words signify how contentedness may be attained, or how it is produced: it is not an endowment innate to us; it doth not arrive by chance into us; it is not to be purchased by any price; it springeth not up of itself, nor ariseth from the quality of any state; but it is a product of discipline; *I have learned.*

It is a question debated in Plato, *εἰ διδασκότες η ἀπει,* whether virtue be to be learned; St. Paul plainly resolveth it in this case by his own experience and testimony. What Seneca saith in general of virtue (*Nature giveth not virtue; it is an art to become good*^a) is most true of this virtue; it is an art, with which we are not born, no more than with any other art or science; the which, as other arts, cannot be acquired without studious application of mind, and industrious exercise: no art indeed requireth more hard study and pain toward the acquiry of it, there being so many difficulties, so many obstacles in the way thereto: we have no great capacity, no to-

^a Non dat natura virtutem, am est hominem heri. *Nen. Ep. 34.*
Virtus etiamque quondam impetrat ex natura suavit, tamen per-
cienda doctrina ex. *Quintil. iii. 2.*

SERM. wardly disposition to learn it; we must, in doing it,
XXXVIII. deny our carnal sense, we must settle our wild fancy, and suppress fond conceits; we must bend our stiff and stubborn inclinations; we must repress and restrain wanton desires; we must allay and still tumultuous passions; we must cross our humour and curb our temper: which to do is a hard chapter to learn; much consideration, much practice, much contention and diligence are required thereto.

Hence it is an art which we may observe few do much study; and of the students therein few are great proficients; so that, *Qui fit, Mecænas?* Horace's question, *How comes it to pass, that nobody liveth content with the lot assigned by God?* wanted not sufficient ground.

However, it is not, like the quadrature of the circle, or the philosopher's stone, an art impossible to be learned, and which will baffle all study: there are examples, which shew it to be obtainable; there are rules and precepts, by observing which we may arrive to it.

And it is certainly a most excellent piece of learning; most deserving our earnest study: no other science will yield so great satisfaction, or good use; all other sciences, in comparison thereto, are dry and fruitless curiosities; for were we masters of all other knowledge, yet wanted the skill of being content, we should not be wise or happy; happiness and discontent are *ἀσύντατα*, (things incompatible.)

But how then may this skill be learned? I answer, chiefly (divine grace concurring) by these three ways.
 1. By understanding the rules and precepts, wherein the practice thereof consisteth. 2. By diligent exercise, or application of those rules to practice; whereby

the habit will be produced. 3. By seriously considering, and impressing upon our minds those rational inducements (suggested by the nature and reason of things) which are apt to persuade the practice thereof. The *first* way I have already endeavoured to declare; the *second* wholly dependeth upon the will and endeavour of the learner; the *third* I shall now insist upon, propounding some rational considerations, apt, by God's help, to persuade contentedness, and serving to cure the malady of discontent. They may be drawn from several heads; from God, from ourselves, from our particular condition or state; from the world, or general state of men here; from the particular state of other men in comparison to ours; from the nature and consequences of the duty itself; every thing about us, well examined and pondered, will minister somewhat inducing and assisting thereto.

I. In regard to God we may consider, that equity <sup>Sam. iii.
18.</sup> doth exact, and gratitude requireth, and all reason dictateth, that we should be content; or that, in being discontented, we behave ourselves very unseemingly and unworthily, are very unjust, very ingrateful, and very foolish toward him.

1. Equity doth exact this duty of us, and in performing it we act justly toward God, both admitting his due right, and acknowledging his good exercise thereof; that saying in the gospel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* is a most evident maxim of equity: it is therefore the natural right and prerogative of God, as the Creator and Preserver, and consequently the absolute Lord, Owner, and Governor of all things, to assign his station, and allot his portion to every person, as he

SERM. judgeth good and convenient ; it is most just that in-
XXXVIII. viably he should enjoy this right : he being also in-
 finitely wise and good, it is likewise most just to ac-
 knowledge that he doth perfectly well manage this
 right. Now by contentful submission to God's dis-
 posal of things, we do worthily express our due re-
 gard to both these, avowing his right, and approving
 his exercise thereof ; but by discontent and regret at
 what happeneth, we do in effect injure God in both
 those respects, disavowing his right, and impeaching
 his management. We do thereby so renounce his
 right, as (so far as conceit and wish do reach) to in-
 vade it, and usurp it to ourselves ; signifying, that
 in our opinion things ought not to be ordered accord-
 ing to his judgment and pleasure, but after our fancy
 and humour ; we claim to ourselves the privilege of
 controlling his estate, and dispensing his goods, so as
 to be our own carvers, and to assume to ourselves so
 much as we think good ; we imply, that, if we were
 able, we would extort the power out of his hands,
 and manage it ourselves, modelling the world accord-
 ing to our conceits and desires.

We do also, (since we cannot but perceive the
 other attempt of dispossessing God to be frivolous
 and fruitless,) in effect, charge God with misdemea-
 our, with iniquity or infirmity in his distribution and
 disposal of things ; intimating, that in our opinion he
 doth not order them so justly or so wisely as might
 be, (not so well as we in our wisdom and justice
 should order them;) for did we conceive them ma-
 naged for the best, we could not but judge it most
 unreasonable to be aggrieved, or to complain ; so hein-
 ously insolent and unjust are we in being discontent.
 In earnest, which is most equal, that God should

Multos in-
 veni sequos
 adversus
 homines,
 adversus
 Deos nem-
 nem. Sen.
Ep. 93.

have his will, or we? For shame we shall say, God : SERM.
why then do we not contentedly let him have it? XXXVIII.

It is indeed, if we consider it, the highest piece of injustice that we can be guilty of, exceeding that which we commit in any other sort of disobedience. For as in any state seditious mutining is the greatest crime, as most directly violating the majesty, and subverting the authority of the prince ; so in the world none may be supposed more to offend and wrong its sovereign Governor, than such malecontents, who dislike and blame his proceedings : even a heathen could teach us, that it is our duty to *subject our mind to him that administereth all things, as good citizens to the law of the commonwealth*^b; if we do not, we are rebellious and seditious, which is the highest pitch of injustice toward our most gracious Sovereign.

Again, there can be no greater injury or affront offered to God, than to *give him the lie*, by questioning his veracity or fidelity ; this discontent plainly doth involve : for God hath expressly declared himself ready upon all occasions to do us good ; he hath promised to *care for us*, and *never to forsake us*, or leave us destitute ; which word of Matt. vi. 25, 36. Heb. xiii. 5. his if we did not distrust, and take him to be unfaithful, we could not be discontent : as no man is displeased with his condition, or suspicious of want, who knoweth that he hath abundant supply of all he can need in a sure place ; that he hath a person most able, most willing, most faithful, engaged to succour him ; so, did we believe God to be true, who

^b Τὴν αὐτοῦ γνώμην ἴποιάσσει τῷ διοικοῦτι: τὰ δὲ, καθάπερ εἰ ἀγαθοὶ πολίται τῷ νόμῳ τῆς πόλεως. *Ari. i. 12.*

SERM. hath promised to help us, we could not be discontented for fear of any want.

We must at least, in so doing, suspect God to be deficient in goodness toward us, or unwilling to help us; or we must apprehend him impotent, and unable to perform what he would, and what he hath promised for us, (like those infidels, who said, *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?*) which conceits of God are also very unworthy, and injurious to him.

Ps. lxxviii. 19.
2. Gratitude requireth of us this duty: for we having no right or title to any thing; all that we have coming from God's pure bounty; he having upon us all (whatever our condition comparatively is, or may seem to us) freely conferred many great benefits, common to all men among us, (our being, life, reason, capacity of eternal happiness, manifold spiritual blessings, incomparably precious and excellent,) we in all reason should be thankful for these, without craving more, or complaining for the want of other things^c. Whereas also all events, how cross soever to our sensual conceits or appetites, are by God designed and dispensed for our good, gratitude requireth that we should thank God for them, and not murmur against them.

Surely if, instead of rendering God thanks for all the excellent gifts which he most liberally (without any previous obligation to us, or desert of ours) hath bestowed on us, and continueth to bestow, we fret, and quarrel, that he doth not in smaller matters

^c Iniquus est qui muneris sui arbitrium danti non relinquit, avidus qui non lucri loco habet quod accepit, sed damni quod reddidit, &c. *Sen. ad Polyb. 29.*

seem to cocker us, we are extremely ingrateful and SERM.
disengenuous toward him. If any great person here XXXVIII.
should freely bestow on us gifts of huge value, (high
preferment or much wealth,) but with good reason,
as we might presume, should withhold from us some
trifle, that we fancy or dote on, should we not be
very unworthy, if we should take it ill and be angry
with him for that cause? The case is plainly the
same: God hath in the frankest manner bestowed
on us innumerable and inestimable goods, in com-
parison whereto any comfort or convenience of our
state here is very trivial and despicable: are we not
therefore very ingrateful, if we heinously resent the
want of any such things; if, upon any such account,
we disgust his providence? Do we not deal, beyond
all expression, unworthily with God, in so much
undervaluing the goods which he hath given us, or
doth offer us, and hath put in our reach? He hath
made us capable of the greatest goods imaginable,
and faithfully upon easy terms proffereth them to
us; he even tendereth himself (himself, the immense
and all-comprehending good, the fountain of all joy
and bliss) to be fully enjoyed by us: his wisdom he
offereth, to instruct and guide us; his power, to pro-
tect and guard us; his fulness, to supply us; his
goodness, to comfort us; he offereth his love and
favour to us, in having which we virtually and in
effect have all things; becoming thereby, in the
highest degree, rich and honourable and happy: and
is it not then outrageous unworthiness to prize any
other thing (any petty accommodation of this trans-
itory life, any pitiful toy here) so much, as to be dis-
pleased for the want thereof; as if all this were not
enough to satisfy our needs, or satiate our desires;

SERM. as if, notwithstanding all these immense effusions
 XXXVIII. (yea as it were profusions) of bounty upon us, we
 Job ii. 10. could be indigent or unhappy? *Shall we*, to use
 that holy and most ingenuous consideration of Job,
receive so much good from the bountiful hand of
God, and shall we not contentedly receive or bear
so small evils from him? Evils indeed in name and
 to gross sense, but not so in reality, not so in effect,
 at least not so in God's design^d; but rather things
 very convenient and profitable for us; which is another
 aggravation of our ingratitude; for

Are we not also very ingrateful in misapprehending and disliking that, which God doeth out of very gracious intentions toward us; in loathing his fatherly and friendly dispensations; the fatherly chastisements and friendly disciplines, which he unwillingly is forced (is, I say, forced by his own great love and by our pressing needs) to inflict or impose
 Prov. iii. 11. upon us^e? Surely our ill opinion of, or *despising*, as the Wise Man calleth it, these unpleasant blessings is no small fault; neither will our not discerning (out of affected dulness and stupid pravity not discerning) the wisdom of God's methods, and the wholesomeness of the means he useth to better us, excuse us from foul ingratitude.

*Eὐχαριστῶ σοι πάτερ, ὃ ποιητὰ τῶν σῶν ἀνθρώπων—ὅτι ἀκοντας ἡμᾶς
 τοὺς θεούς αἰτοῦσαν,
 ἐπειδὴν τὸ μὴ πάσχειν οὐκ ἔχω, τοῦτό γε τῷ πάσχειν παρακερδαῖν,
 δέσποτας ἐστίν*
 Xenoph. de Socr.

^d Εὐχαριστῶ σοι πάτερ, ὃ ποιητὰ τῶν σῶν ἀνθρώπων—ὅτι ἀκοντας ἡμᾶς
 εἰς ποιεῖ, &c. said Philagrius in a grievous disease. Naz. Ep. 66.

^e Ἐπειδὴν τὸ μὴ πάσχειν οὐκ ἔχω, τοῦτό γε τῷ πάσχειν παρακερδαῖν,
 τὸ φέρειν, καὶ τὸ εὐχαριστεῖν. Naz. de Se. Ep. 63.

what is good for us than we can do ; because he is well affected to us, and more truly loveth us than we do ourselves ; because he hath a just right, and irresistible power to dispose of us, the which (whatever we can do, however we resent it) he will effectually make use of ; whence it is extremely foolish to be discontent : foolish it is to be dissatisfied with the results of his wisdom, adhering to our vain apprehensions ; foolish to distrust his goodness in compliance with our fond self-love ; foolish to contest his unquestionable right and uncontrollable power, having nothing but mere impotency to oppose against them ; no less than downright madness it is to fret and fume at that which we can nowise help, to bark at that which lodgeth in heaven so far high above us, Eph. vi. 12. πλαίσιον, ἔτερον μὲν τῷ φύσῃ, πάλιν οὐτερον. Philem. to solicit deaf necessity with our ineffectual wailings ; for if we think that our displeasure will affect God, that our complaints will incline him to alter our condition or comply with our wishes, we do conceit vainly, and without any ground ; sooner may we, by our imagination, stop the tides of the sea, or turn the streams of rivers backward ; sooner, by our cries, may we stay the sun, and change all the courses of the stars, than by our passionate resentments or moanful clamours we can check the current of affairs, or alter that state of things which is by God's high decree established : discontented behaviour will rather fasten our condition, or remove it into a worse place ; as it highly doth offend God, and increaseth our guilt, so it moveth God to continue, and to augment our evils. Thus lifting up our eyes to heaven, and considering the reference our disposition and demeanour hath to God, will induce us to bear our case contentedly.

SERM. II. Again, reflecting upon ourselves, we may observe much reason to be content with our state; in whatever capacity we look upon ourselves, it in reason becometh us, we in duty are obliged to be so.

XXXVIII.
Lam. iii.
39.

As men and creatures, we naturally are indigent and impotent; we have no just claim to any thing, nor any possession maintainable by our power; all that we have, or can have, cometh from most pure courtesy and bounty; wherefore how little soever is allowed us, we have no wrong done us, nor can we justly complain thereat: such beggars as we are must not pretend to be choosers; if any thing be given us, we may be glad, we should be thankful. It is for those who have a right and a power to maintain it to resent and expostulate, if their due be withheld: but for us, that never had any thing which we could call our own; that have no power to get or keep any thing; for us, that came into the world naked and defenceless, that live here in continual, absolute, and arbitrary dependance for all our livelihood and subsistence; to contest with him that maintaineth us, or to complain of his dealing, is ridiculously absurd and vain.

Matt. xv.
17.

Upon a moral account we have less reason to challenge ought, or to complain of any thing; for we deserve nothing but evil: if we rightly esteem and value ourselves, any thing will seem good enough for us, any condition will appear better than we deserve: duly examining the imperfections and infirmities of our nature, the disorder and depravedness of our hearts, the demeanours and enormities of our lives, we cannot but apprehend that we are even unworthy of the *crumbs which fall from our Master's table*; we cannot but acknowledge with the

good patriarch, that we are *less than the least of God's mercies*. Considering our natural unworthiness, we shall see that we deserve not so much as those common benefits which all men enjoy, and without which we cannot subsist; so that, in regard to them, we shall be ready to acknowledge with the Psalmist, *Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him; or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!* Trying our hearts, and examining our ways, we shall soon discover it to be abundant mercy, that we are not utterly deprived of all good things, stript of all comforts, yea, dispossessed of our very being and life itself; that we are obliged to acknowledge, with those in the Lamentations, *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* Were we far better than we are, yet it would not become us to contest with him, to whose disposal and judgment we are subject; as Job teacheth us: *Behold, saith he, God taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou? If he will not withdraw his anger the proud* helpers do stoop under him. How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him? Whom, though I were righteous, I would not answer, but I would make supplication to my Judge:* but for us, men so unrighteous and guilty, to debate with, to question the proceedings of our Judge, it is much more unseemly.

Nothing can be more absurd, than for men so deeply indebted, than for sinners so very obnoxious to wrath, to be aggrieved in any state: shall we, who are conscious to ourselves of so many great sins against our God; who, by wilful transgressions or slothful neglects, have so much affronted and offend-

SERM. ed him ; who have so little requited his love, and so
XXXVIII. much abused his patience ; who have borne so little fruit, and rendered him so little service ; shall we be angry that our humour is not pleased in all things ? Shall we affect to swim in plenty, to wallow in pleasure, to bask ourselves in ease ; to be fed with dainties, to be gaily clothed, to flourish in a brave and splendid condition, to be worshipped and honoured ; who deserve not the meanest competence or lowest respect, to whom it is a great favour that we are permitted to subsist, whom strict justice would often have cast into utter misery and disconsolateness ? It is not surely for such persons to be dissatisfied with any thing in this world, but to bless God's exceeding mercy that they abide there on this side of the bottomless pit ; it is their part, with most submissive patience, to bear whatever is inflicted on them, humbly

Mic. vii. 9. saying with him in the prophet, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* Seeing, whatever our crosses or sufferings be, we cannot but confess to God, with those in

Ezra ix. 13. Ezra, *Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve ;* being gainers upon the master, having so much of our debt remitted in effect ; being, in comparison to what was due to us, very tolerably, yea very favourably dealt with, why should we be dissatisfied ? If in such cases men should deal so favourably with us, we should be much pleased, and ready to thank them ; why then should we take it ill of God, when he, even in his hardest proceedings against us, expresseth so much indulgence and mercy ?

If we must be displeased, and lust to complain, we have reason much rather to accuse ourselves, than to

exclaim at Providence; to bewail our sins, than to SERM.
 deplore our fortune; for our evils are not indeed so XXXVIII.
 much the voluntary works of God, who *doth not* Lam.iii.33.
afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men, as ^{Ἄιδηγεται} _{τί πονεῖται.}
 the natural products of our sins, which we do wil-
 fully commit: it is, as the prophet speaketh, *our* Jer. v. 25.
sins that withhold good things from us, and bring
 evil things upon us: *fools, because of their trans-* Psal. civil.
gression, and because of their iniquities, are af- ^{xxi. 14.}
flicted. We make adversity necessary, or expedient
 for us, then we cry out upon it: we labour in plant-
 ing, but cannot brook *the fruit of our doings;* we, ^{xxii. 19.} Jer.xvii. 10.
 like prodigals, fling away our estate in wanton pro-^{xxii. 19.}
 fusions, then complain of want; we affect and choose
 the causes, but loathe and cannot abide the certain
 consequences; so fond in our conceits, so perverse
 are we in our affections: *Wherfore doth the living* Lam.iii. 39.
man complain for the punishment of his sins? so
 well might the prophet demand and expostulate.

We may further, looking on ourselves, consider
 ourselves as servants to God, or rather as slaves, ab-
 solutely subject to his disposal; and shall any ser-
 vant, shall a mere slave presume to choose his place,
 or determine his rank in the family? Shall he appoint
 to himself what office he will discharge, what garb
 he shall go in, what diet he must have; what he will
 do, and how he shall be accommodated? Is it not fit
 that all these things should be left to our Master's
 discretion and pleasure? It is most reasonable that
 we should thoroughly acquiesce in his determination:
 even a pagan philosopher could teach us that this is
 reasonable, who thus piously directeth his speech to
 God; *For the rest use me to what thou pleasest.*
I do consent unto thee, and am indifferent. I re-

SERM. *fuse nothing which seemeth good to thee. Lead me whither thou wilt; put on me what garment thou pleasest. Wilt thou have me to be a governor or a private man, to stay at home or to be banished away, to be poor or to be rich? I will, in respect to all these things, apologize for thee with men¹;* thus did Epictetus say, and such speech well becometh our relation to God: servants should be content with their masters' appointments and allowances; they should not only themselves forbear to find fault with, but be ready to maintain his proceedings against any who shall presume to reprehend or blame them.

Luke xvii. *Especially such servants as we are, who, after we have done all things commanded us, must acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants; such as can bring no considerable benefit to our Lord, or anywise advance his state; such as therefore cannot challenge any wages from him more than he out of mere favour is pleased to allow: could we by our labours enrich God, or raise him in dignity, or procure delight to him, it might seem congruous that he should answerably reward us; but as he getteth nothing by us, so we cannot require any thing from him: our best services do indeed rather need pardon, than deserve any reward: no man hath lived so well, that he can pretend any thing from God, that he is not indeed much behindhand in his accounts with God, having received from God far more of benefit than he can return to him in service: no man, without extreme presumption and arrogance, can offer to*

¹ Χρῶ μοι λοιπὸν εἰς ὁ ἀν θέλησ. Ὁμογνωμονῶ σοι, ἵσος εἰμί. Οὐδὲ παραιτοῦμαι τῶν σαι δοκούντων. Ὅπου θέλεις ἄγε, ἣν θέλεις ἐσθῆτα περιθες. Ἀρχειν με θέλεις, ἰδιοτέλειν, μένειν, φεύγειν, πένεσθαι, πλουτεῖν; ἔγώ σαι ἀπέρ απάντων τούτων πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀπολογήσομαι. Αγγ. ii. 16.

scribe, in what measure, or what manner, God ^{SER.M.}
ould reward him. ^{XXXVIII.}

Again, if we consider ourselves as the children of God, either by birth or nature, or by adoption and race, how can we be discontent for any thing? Have we not thence great reason to hope, or rather to be confident, that we shall never want any good thing, necessary or convenient for us,) that no great evil shall ever oppress us? For is not God hence by paternal disposition inclined, is he not in a manner by paternal duty engaged, in all needful occasions to supply and succour us? Can we, without great proneness, and no less folly, surmise, that he, which is so immensely good, will be a bad (an unkind, or a neglectful) Father to us? No; as there is no other Father in goodness comparable to him, so none, in real effects of benignity, can come near him; so our Lord assureth us: *If ye, saith he, being evil, know Matt. vii.^{11.} how to give good things unto your children; how much more will our heavenly Father give good things to his children that ask him?*

If we consider ourselves as Christians, we have still more reason to practise this duty: as such, we are not only possessed of goods abundantly sufficient to satisfy our desires; we have hopes able to raise our minds above the sense of all present things; we have entertainments that ever may divert our minds, and fill our hearts with comfort: but we have also an assurance of competent supplies of temporal goods; for, *Godliness is profitable to all things, having the Tim.iv. 8. promise both of the present life, and of that which is to come:* and, *If we seek first the kingdom of Matt.iv. 33. heaven, and its righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us.* It is indeed strangely unhand-

SERM. some for a Christian ever to droop, or to be disconsolate; for a friend of God, and an heir of heaven, to think he wants any thing, or fear that he shall ever want; for him, whose treasure and heart are above, to be so concerned with any thing here as deeply to resent it.

Again, if we reflect upon ourselves as rational men, how for shame can we be discontent? Do we not therein much disparage that excellent perfection of our nature? Is it not the proper work of reason to prevent things hurtful or offensive to us, when that may be done; to remove them, if they are removable; if neither of these can be compassed, to allay and mitigate them; so that we may be able well to support them? Is it not its principal use to drive away those fond conceits, and to quell those troublesome passions, which create or foment disquiet and displeasure to us? If it cannot do this, what doth it signify? to what purpose have we it? Is not our condition really worse than that of brute beasts, if reason serveth only to descry the causes of trouble, but cannot enable to bear it? All the reasons we have produced, and all that we shall produce against discontent, will, if we are reasonable men, and reason availeth any thing, have this effect upon us.

Wherefore considering ourselves, our capacities, our relations, our actions, it is most reasonable to be content with our condition, and with whatever doth befall us.

S E R M O N XXXIX.

OF CONTENTMENT.

PHIL. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatever state, &c.

III. FURTHER, if we consider our condition, (be it what it will, how poor, how mean, how despicable and forlorn soever,) we can have from it no reasonable ground of discontent.

1. Our condition in this world cannot, if rightly estimated, and well managed, be extremely bad or sorrowful; nothing here can occur insupportable, or very grievous in itself; we cannot, if we please, want any thing considerable, and the defect whereof may not be supplied, or supported by far better enjoyments. If we have high opinions of some things, as very excellent or very needful for us, it is no wonder if we do want them, that our condition is unpleasant to us; if we take other things for huge evils, then, if they be incumbent on us, we can hardly scape being displeased: but if we thoroughly look through such things, and scan them exactly, valuing them, not according to fallacious impressions of sense, or illusive dreamings of fancy, but according to sound dictates of reason, we may find that neither absence of the former nor the presence of the latter doth make

SERM. our condition much worse, or render our case de-
XXXIX. plorable.

Tert. de
Pat. 7.

Vid. Plut. in
Arist.

We are, for instance, poor : that condition, rightly weighed, is not so very sad : for what is poverty? what but the absence of a few superfluous things, which please wanton fancy rather than answer need^a; without which nature is easily satisfied, and which if we do not affect we cannot want? what is it but to wear coarse clothes, to feed on plain and simple fare, to work and take some pains, to sit or go in a lower place, to have no heaps of cash or hoards of grain, to keep no retinue, to have few friends, and not one flatterer? And what great harm in this? It is a state which hath its no small conveniences and comforts, its happy fruits and consequences; which freeth us from many cares and distractions, from many troubles and crosses, from many encumbrances, many dangers, many temptations, many sore distempers of body and soul, many grievous mischiefs, to which wealth is exposed; which maintaineth health, industry, and sobriety; disposeth us to feed heartily, to move nimbly, to sleep sweetly; which preserveth us from luxury, from satiety, from sloth and unwieldiness^b. It yieldeth disposition of mind, freedom and leisure to attend the study of truth, the acquist of virtue. It is a state which many have borne with great cheerfulness; many (very wise men) have voluntarily

^a Τὰ δ' ἀργυράματα^c ἔστιν ὅτε πορφύρα

Εἰς τοὺς τραγῳδίας χρήσιμον εἴς τὸν βίον. Socrat.

^b Si vis vacare animo, aut pauper sis oportet, aut pauperi similis.

Multis ad philosophandum obstitere divitiae; paupertas expedita est, secura est. *Sen. Ep. 17.*

Sæpius pauper et fidelius ridet. *Sen. Ep. 80.*

embraced; which is allotted by divine wisdom to most men; and which the best men often do endure; XXXIX. to which God hath declared an especial regard, which the mouth of truth hath proclaimed happy; which the Son of God hath dignified by his choice, and sanctified by his partaking deeply thereof: and can such a condition be very loathsome? can it reasonably displease us?

Again, thou art, suppose, fallen into disgrace, or from honour and credit art depressed into a state of contempt and infamy? This also rightly prized is no such wretchedness; for what doth this import? what, but a change of opinion in giddy men, which thou dost not feel, which thou art not concerned in, if thou pleaseest; which thou never hadst reason much to regard, or at all to rely upon? what is thy loss therein? it is the breaking of a bubble, the sinking of a wave, the changing of a wind, the cracking of a thing most brittle, the slipping away of a thing most fugacious and slippery: what is honour, and fame, but thought? and what more flitting, what sooner gone away than a thought? And why art thou displeased at the loss of a thing so very slender and slim? If thou didst know its nature, thou canst not be disappointed; if thou didst not, it was worth thy while to be thus informed by experience, that thou mayest not any more regard it. Is the contempt thou hast incurred from thy fault? bear the consequence thereof patiently, and do thy best by removing the cause to reverse the effect: is it undeserved and causeless? be satisfied in thy innocence, and be glad that thou art above the folly and injustice of those who contemn thee. Let thy affections rather be employed in pity of theirs, than in displeasure for thy own case.

Psal. x. 14.xxxv. 10.lviii. 10.lxix. 33.lxxii. 4. 13.cxl. 12.cxlvi. 7.cxlvii. 2.Luke vi. 20.Jam. ii. 5.Isa. lxvi. 2.

SERM. Did, let me ask thee again, the good opinion of men
XXXIX. please thee? that pleasure was fond and vain, and
it is well thou art rid of it: did it not much affect
thee? why then dost thou much grieve at the loss
thoreof? Is not also thy fortune in this kind the
same with that of the best men? have not those who
have deserved most honour been exposed to most
Job xxx. 1, contempt? *But now,* Job could say, *they that are*
^{10.} *younger than I have me in derision,—they abhor*
me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in
Ps. xxii. 6, *my face.* And, *I am,* could that great and good king
^{7.} *say, a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and*
despised of the people: all they that see me laugh
me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the
^{1 Cor. iv.} *head:—and, we are defamed, we are reviled,*
^{12, 13.} *we are made as the filth of the world, and the off-*
scouring of all things unto this day, could the holy
Isa. liii. 3. *apostles say;* and, *He is despised and rejected*
of men— he was despised and we esteemed
him not, was said of our Lord himself: and can
this condition then in just esteem be so very pitiful
or grievous?

But thou art perhaps troubled because thou art
wrongfully censured, odiously traduced and defamed,
abused by slander or by detraction; which aspers-
eth thee with things whereof thou art nowise guilty,
or representeth thee in a character unworthy of
thee^c: be it so; what then? why doth this so much
affect thee?

Is not every man subject to these things? are not
the greatest men, are not the wisest men, are not

^c Exempl. Jeremiæ. Chrys. ad Olymp. 16.

Gratias ago Deo meo, quod dignus sum quem mundus oderit.
Hier. Ep. 39. (*ad Asellam.*)

the best men liable to the same? yea chiefly liable, SERM. excellency being the special mark of envy and oblo- XXXIX.
quy? Can any good men escape free of them among 'Αλλ' ει μή
so many bad men, whose doings as goodness doth οὐδείς
reproach, so it provoketh their malignity? Canst Theod. Ep.
thou imagine to pass thy days in so unjust and 8o,
spiteful a world without incurring such bad usage?
can so many vain, so many bold, so many lawless
tongues be tied up, or kept within compass of truth
or equity? Wilt thou suffer it to be in the power
of any man at his pleasure so easily to discompose
and vex thee? because he will be bad, shalt thou
be miserable? why dost thou not rather please thy-
self in the conscience of thy endeavouring to deserve
and do well; in thy innocence, and clearness from
the blame which they impose on thee; in thy having
given no cause of such offence and outrage? why
dost thou not rather pity their unworthiness and
unhappiness, who stoop to so mean and base prac-
tices, than fret at them, as bad to thee? They
do themselves far more mischief than they can do
thee.

And why dost thou not consider, that indeed thou art guilty of many faults, and full of real imperfections, so that no man can easily derogate from thee more than thou deservest: he may indeed tax thee unjustly, he may miss in the particulars of his charge, he may discover groundless contempt and ill-will toward thee: but thou knowest thyself to be a grievous sinner, and it is just that thou shouldst be reproached, (God, for thy humiliation or thy correction, may have ordered him, as David said he might have ordered Shimei, *to curse thee;*) thou hast therefore more need to be humble in reflection on

SERM. thyself, than to swell with disdain in regard to his
XXXIX. injury.

Theodor.
Ep. 83.

Thou shouldst improve this dealing, and make it wholesome to thee, by taking occasion thence to correct thy real faults, and endeavouring to become truly more worthy; that so thy conscience may be a firm bulwark against all detraction and obloquy: in fine, satisfy thyself by *committing thy soul with patience in well-doing* unto thy Judge, who assuredly will do thee right, will protect thy reputation, and clear thy innocence: his judgment is only worth regarding, be little concerned with any other.

Again, being disappointed and crossed in the success of their projects, or undertakings, is wont to put men, as they conceive, into a woful case: but why so? why, let me ask thee, who art discontented upon this score, didst thou build much expectation upon uncertainties? didst thou not foresee a possibility that thy design might miscarry? and if so, why art thou not prepared to receive what happeneth? was it not an adventure? why then art thou troubled with thy chance? Is he not a silly gamester, that will fret and fume at a bad cast, or at the loss of a game? Didst thou refer the business to God's disposal and arbitrement? if not, thou deservedst to be crossed, and rather confess thy fault, than complain of thy fortune: if thou didst so, then be consistent with thyself, and acquiesce in his determination: in fine, what is thy loss, is it of thy care and pain? would it have been much better, that thou hadst been careless or idle? but hast thou not in lieu of them got some wisdom and experience? hast thou not (if thy attempt was reasonable and worthy) exercised thy wit, thy courage,

thy industry? hast thou not (by thy defeat) got an SERM. opportunity to express equanimity and patience? if XXXIX. thou so improvest thy disappointment, thou art a gainer by thy loss, thou *dost more than conquer* by thy defeat: however, since the gain, the credit, the preferment thou didst aim at, and hast missed, are things in themselves of no great value, and such as thou mayest well live without, as other good men, have done, thou *caust not have much reason to be displeased upon this account, or to reckon thy condition very disastrous.*

But friends, will some men say, have been unkind, have been ungrateful, have been fickle and false, have neglected, have deserted, have betrayed me; *It was not an enemy that reproached me, then* Psal. lv. 12. *I could have borne it, &c.* this is indeed commonly most grievous; yet being scanned will not render a man's condition so lamentable: for such misbehaviour of friends is more their calamity than ours: the loss of bad friends is no damage, but an advantage; it is but the loss of a mischief, and a trou-^{ble}: the fewer we come to have of such, the more time we save, the less trouble we meet with, the greater security we enjoy. The kindness we have shewed, the obligations we have put on such, are not quite lost, they will bring the reward due to humanity and fidelity; it will yield satisfaction to us, that, however, we have been kind and faithful to them. The fidelity of remaining true friends may satisfy us: however if all other friendships should fail, there is one remains, worth millions of other friends, who can never prove unfaithful or inconstant, who never will be unmindful of us, or deficient in kindness toward us.

S E R M. The death of friends doth, it may be, oppress thee
XXXIX. with sorrow.

Vid. Sen.
Ep. 63.

But canst thou lose thy best friend? canst thou lose the presence, the conversation, the protection, the advice, the succour of God? is he not immortal? is he not immutable? is he not inseparable from thee? canst thou be destitute of friends, whilst he stands by thee? Is it not an affront, an heinous indignity to him, to behave thyself, as if thy happiness, thy welfare, thy comfort had dépendance on any other but him? is it not a great fault to be unwilling to part with any thing, when he calleth for it?

Vid. Greg.
Naz. Ep.
202.

Neither is it a loss of thy friend, but a separation for a small time: he is only parted from thee as taking a little journey, or going for a small time to repose^d: within a while we shall be sure to meet again, and joyfully to congratulate, if we are fit, in a better place, and more happy state; *præmisimus, non amisimus*; we have sent him thither before, not quite lost him from us^e.

Thy friend, if he be a good man, (and in such friendships only we can have true satisfaction,) is himself in no bad condition, and doth not want thee; thou canst not therefore reasonably grieve for him; and to grieve only for thyself is perverse selfishness and fondness^f.

^d Οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν ὁ πάντα ἔριστος ἐκεῖνος ἀλήρης, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου φωνὴν, ἀλλὰ καθεύδει ἔνον τοῦ συνῆθους μακρότερον. Theod. Ep. 68.

^e Αποδημίας τοίνυν παρακαλῶ μακρὰν τὴν τελευτὴν, &c. Theod. Ep. 14.

^c Cur doles si periisse non credis? cur impatienter feras subductum interim quem credis reversurum? profectio est quam putas mortem. Tert. de Pat. 9. Sen. Ep. 63.

^f Impatientia in ejusmodi et spei nostræ male ominatur, et fidem prævaricatur, &c. Tert. ibid.

Ποῦ τὸ τῆς ἀγάπης ἀγαθὸν, ἐαντῷ τὰ ῥά διδόντα τῷ πλησίον ἀπονέμειν
τὰ προσαντέστερα; Naz. Or. 19.

But thou hast lost a great comfort of thy life, and advantage to thy affairs here; is it truly so? is it indeed an irreparable loss, even secluding the consideration of God, whose friendship repaireth all possible loss? What is it, I pray, that was pleasant, convenient, or useful to thee in thy friend, which may not in good measure be supplied here? was it a sense of hearty good-will, was it a sweet freedom of conversation, was it sound advice or kind assistance in thy affairs? and mayest thou not find those left, which are alike able and willing to minister those benefits? may not the same means, which knit him to thee, conciliate others also to be thy friends? Vid. Sen. Ep. 63. He did not alone surely possess all the good-nature, all the fidelity, all the wisdom in the world, nor hath carried them all away with him: other friends therefore thou mayest find to supply his room: all good men will be ready, if thou art good, to be thy friends; they will heartily love thee; they will be ready to cheer thee with their sweet and wholesome society, to yield thee their best counsel and help upon any occasion: is it not therefore a fond and unaccountable affection to a kind of personality, rather than want of a real convenience, that disturbeth thee?

In fine, the same reasons, which in any other loss may comfort us, should do it also in this: neither a friend nor any other good thing we can enjoy under any security of not soon losing it; our welfare is not annexed to one man no more than to any other inferior thing: this is the condition of all good things here to be transient and separable from us; and accordingly we should be affected toward them.

Fragile fractum est, mortale mortuum est.

SERM.
XXXIX. But further, it perhaps displeaseth us, that the course of the world doth not go right, or according to our mind ; that justice is not well dispensed, that virtue is under hatches, that worth is not considered, that industry is not rewarded, that innocence and modesty are trampled upon ; that favour, partiality, corruption, flattery, craft, impudence do carry all before them ; devouring all the encouragements due to honest industry : this may be observed, but why should it displease ? art thou guilty of contributing to this ? then mend ; if not, then bear ; especially seeing thou canst not help it ; for so it hath always been and ever will be in the world, that things never have gone there as the wisest judge, or the best men desire : there have never been good men enough to sway the world ; nor will the few good men that are, be so active in promoting public good, as bad are in driving on their private designs. Doth not this course of things necessarily spring from the nature of men, which therefore we should no more be vexed at, than for that a serpent hath poison, or that a wasp hath a sting ? we cannot wonder at it, why then should we be strangely affected by it ? could any man ever have been pleased, if this were a sufficient cause of displeasure ? However the world goes, we may yet make a tolerable shift ; God is engaged competently to provide for us ; that should satisfy us. God observeth these things no less than we, and he can easily hinder them, yet he thinketh good to suffer them ; and shall not we do so likewise ? There is in fine appointed a judgment hereafter, when all these things shall be redressed and set straight ; when justice and virtue shall triumph, when integrity and industry shall find their due recompense : it is

but a moment to that time, and till then we may SERM.
rest satisfied. XXXIX.

Thus if we do survey and rightly state things, which cause discontent, and seem to render our condition hard and sad, we shall find, that not from the things, but from ourselves all the mischief proceeds: we by our imagination give to the lightest things a weight, and swell the smallest things into a vast bulk; we fancy them very frightful and doleful, then we tremble and grieve at them. Mere names (the names of poverty, of disgrace, of defeat) do scare us, without consulting reason, and considering how little terrible the things are themselves. We follow silly prejudices, judging that highly good, which the vulgar admireth; that very evil, which the weakest sort of men are wont to complain of: hence so commonly doth our case seem grievous. But in truth there is no condition so bad, but if we manage it well and wisely, if we bend our mind to comply with it, if we moderate our passions about the accidents thereof, if we vigilantly embrace and enjoy the advantages thereof, may not be easily supportable, yea prove very comfortable to us: it is our fond conceits, our foward humours, our perverse behaviours, which do create the trouble, which seemeth adherent to any condition, and embittereth every state; which from any slight occasion doth create vexation, and turneth every event into disaster.

2. As there is no condition here perfectly and purely good^s, (not deficient in some conveniences, not blended with some troubles,) so there is none so thoroughly bad, that it hath not somewhat conve-

^s —— usque adeo nulla est sincera voluptas
Solicitique aliquid lætis intervenit. *Ovid.*

S E R M. nient and comfortable therein; seldom or never all
XXXIX. good things do forsake a man at once, or all mis-
chiefs together assail him; somewhat usually abideth,
which, well improved or wisely enjoyed, may satisfy
a man, yea render his estate comparable to theirs,
who to vulgar eyes appear to be in the best condi-
tion: there is in every condition somewhat of good
compensating for its evils, and reducing it to a
balance with other more plausible states^b. We are,
suppose again, in poverty, (that instance I propound
usually, as the most ordinary ground of discontent;) but
have we therewith good health? then most rich
men may envy us, and reasonably we should not ex-
change our state with many crazy princes: have we
therewith our liberty? that is an inestimable good,
which oftentimes the greatest men have wanted, and
would have purchased with heaps of gold: have we
therein a quiet mind, and a free use of our time? it
is that, which wisest men have prized above any
wealth, and which the chief men of the world would
be glad to taste of: have we a clear reputation? we
have then the best good that any wealth can yield,
we have more than many can obtain in the most
splendid fortune: have we any friends sticking to
us? that is more than the richest persons can assure
themselves of, to whom it is near impossible to dis-
tinguish the friends of their person from the flat-
terers of their fortune; it is a privilege and solace
which princes are hardly capable to arrive at: have
we a bare competency, sufficient to maintain our

^b Assuescendum conditioni suæ; et quam minimum de illa
querendum, et quicquid habet circa se commodi apprehendendum
est: nihil tam acerbum est, ex quo non æquus animus solatium
inveniat. *Scn. de Tranq. An. cap. 10.*

life? we thereby keep our appetites in better compass, and our faculties in greater vigour; we thence better relish all things; we in consequence thereof avoid the burdens, the diseases, the vices of sloth and luxury: have we further (as, if we are not very bad, we shall in this case assuredly have, humanity disposing all men thereto) the compassion of men? is not this somewhat better than that envy, that ill-will, that obloquy, which usually do attend wealth and prosperity? Why then, if our poor state hath so manifold conveniences, do we so much distaste it? why do we so dwell and pore on the small inconveniences we feel under it, overlooking or slighting the benefits we may enjoy thereby? This indeed ordinarily is our folly and infirmity, that the want of any little thing, which we fancy or affect, doth hinder us from satisfaction in all other things: *One dead fly causeth all our ointment to stink;* the possession of a kingdom will not keep us from being *heavy and displeased,* as Ahab was, if we cannot acquire a small vineyard near us; on that one thing our head runs continually, our heart is wholly set, we can think on, we can taste nothing else; the want of that; notwithstanding all our affluence, doth pinch us; our dainties thence do prove insipid, our splendours appear dim, every thing but that is a toy unto us: so capriciously and unaccountably prone are we to discontent.

3. Is our condition, let me ask again, so extremely bad, that it cannot be much worse? Are we sunk to the bottom of all calamity? No surely; God's providence will not suffer, the state of things here can never admit that to be; here are succours always ready against extremities; our own wit and industry,

SERM.
XXXIX.

Prov. xxvii.

^{7.}

Eccles. x. 1.

Kingsxxi.

^{1.}

SERM. the help of relations or friends, the natural pity and
XXXIX. charity of our neighbours, will preserve us from them; especially persons in any measure innocent can never come near them: there will therefore never fail some good matter of content in what remains; a few good things, well improved, may greatly solace us. But, however, let us imagine our case to be the worst that can be; that a confluence of all temporal mischiefs and wants hath arrived, that we are utterly bereaved of all the comforts this world afforded; that we are stripped of all our wealth, quite sunk in our reputation, deserted of every friend, deprived of our health and our liberty; that all the losses, all the disgraces, all the pains

Job, who which poor Job sustained, or far more and greater
 ισίωνας αἰ-
 τῶν (τοῦ δια-
 βήλου) βαλε-
 θηκεν, ἀπώ-
 σεν κατεργα-
 ξινόμενος δι;
 αὐτῶν, &c.
 Chrys. ad
 Olymp. 2.

than those, have together seized on us; yet we can-
 not have sufficient reason to be discontent; for that
 nevertheless we have goods left to us in our hands,
 or within our reach, far surpassing all those goods

we have lost, much outweighing the evils we do undergo: when the world hath done its worst, we remain masters of things incomparably better than it, and all it containeth; the possession whereof may, and, if we be wise, will abundantly satisfy us. We are men still, and have our reason left behind, which alone, in worth, exceedeth all the treasures of the world; in well using which, and thereby ordering all things for the best, we become more worthy, and more happy than the most fortunate fool on earth; we may therein find more true satisfaction, than any wealth or any glory here can minister: we may have a good conscience left, (the sense of having lived well heretofore, or at least a serious resolution to live well hereafter,) and that is a *continual feast*,

yielding a far more solid and savoury pleasure, than SERM.
the most ample revenue can afford: we may have XXXIX.
hope in God, (the author and donor of all good
things,) and thereby far greater assurance of our
convenient subsistence and welfare, than all present
possessions can bestow; we have reserved a free ac-
cess to the throne of grace, and thereby a sure means
(grounded on God's infallible word and promise) of
obtaining whatever is good for us; we have a firm
right to innumerable spiritual blessings and privi-
leges, each of them justly valuable beyond whole
worlds of self; we can, in a word, (we can if we
please,) enjoy God's favour, which immensely tran-
scendeth all other enjoyments, which vastly more
than countervaleth the absence of all other things:
of this, by applying ourselves to the love and service
of God, we are infallibly capable; of this no worldly
force or fortune can despoil us; we having this, our
condition cannot be poor, contemptible, or pitiful; it
is indeed thereby most rich, glorious, and happy:
for how can he be poor, that hath the Lord of all
things always ready to supply him; who hath *God*, Psal. lxxiii.
as the Psalmist is wont to speak, to be *his portion* 26. xvi. 5.
for ever? how can he be despicable, that hath the cxxix. 57.
honour to have the Sovereign Majesty of the world
for his especial friend? how can he be miserable
who enjoyeth the fountain of all happiness, who hath
the light of God's countenance to cheer him, who
hath the consolations of God's holy Spirit to refresh
and revive him? what can he want, who, beside his
present interest in all the needful effects of God's
bountiful love, is an heir of heaven and everlasting
bliss? Seeing therefore it is in our power to be re-
ligious; seeing we may, if we will, (God's grace con-

SERM. curring, which preventeth us to seek, which never is
XXXIX. withheld from those who seek it,) be good Christians;
 seeing nothing can hinder us from fearing God, or
 Rom. viii. can *separate us from his love*, neither can any thing
 39. render our condition bad or unhappy, really dis-
 Ps. xxxiv. 9. tressed or needy: *O fear the Lord*, saith the Psalm-
 ist, *for there is no want to them that fear him: the*
 πλούτοις ι- *young lions* (or the rich, as the LXX. render it) *do*
 πείναντες. *lack and suffer hunger; but they that seek the*
 LXX. *Lord shall not want any good thing;* and, *Whoso*
 Eccles. viii. *keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing,*
 5. *upon all them that seek him*, saith the prophet;
 Ezra viii. *saith the Wise Man;* and, *The hand of our God is*
 22. *upon all them that seek him*, saith the prophet;
 1 Pet. iii. 13. *and, Who is he that shall harm you, (or do ill to*
 'Ο πεινάντων. *you, or make you worse,) if ye be followers of that*
 Rom. viii. *which is good?* saith St. Peter; and, *We know,*
 28. *saith St. Paul, that to them who love God, all things*
 1 Tim. vi. 6. *cooperate for good;* and, *Godliness*, saith he again,
 with *contentedness is great gain;* that is, supposing
 we have the goods which piety ministereth, although
 we have nothing more, we are, if we can be content,
 very well to pass; it is abundantly sufficient for us.

Why then, I pray, are we discontent; what do we groan or grieve for? what is it that we do want? is it the use of reason, is it virtue, is it God's favour? then indeed we have good cause to be displeased; for the want of those things is indeed lamentable: but if we do want them, it is only ourselves that we should complain of; for we may have them if we will, and who can help it if we will not? Who, if we shall wilfully deprive ourselves of them, will be concerned to mind our complaints? But is it only a lump of trash, or a puff of honour, or a flash of pleasure, that we do need? Is it that we cannot

so delicately glut our bellies, or so finely clothe our SERM. backs, or so thoroughly soothe our fancies, as we XXXIX. could wish, that we so pitifully moan? Is it being restrained in some respects from the swinge of our humour, is it that we are not so much regarded, or are slighted by some persons, is it that we are crossed in some design, that so discomposeth and discourageth us? then are we sottishly fond and childish in our conceits and our affections: for proper it is to children, whenas they want no solid or substantial goods, to wail for worthless toys and trinkets; it is for children, when they have not their will in petty and impertinent matters, to cry and lament; children are much affected with every word or little show that crosseth them: if we were (as St. Paul chargeth us to be) *perfect men*, if we had manly ^{1 Cor. xiv.} judgments, and manly affections toward things, we ^{20.} should not so regard or value any of these temporal and transitory things, either good or evil, as by the want of one sort, or by the presence of the other, to be much disturbed; we should, with St. Paul, style any present evil, τὸ ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως, a *lightness of affliction*; we should with him reckon, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glories which shall be revealed to us*; we should, with St. Peter, *greatly rejoice*, ^{1 Pet. i. 6.} *though for a season we are in heaviness, through manifold trials*, or afflictions: we should esteem any condition here very tolerable, yea very good.

4. In truth, (if we will not mince the matter, and can bear a truth sounding like a paradox,) usually our condition is then better, when it seemeth worse; then we have most cause to be glad, when we are aptest to grieve; then we should be thankful, when

SERM. we do complain : that it appeareth otherwise to us,
XXXIX. it is because in our taxations of things we do ordinarily judge (or rather not judge, but fancy, not hearing or regarding any dictate of reason) like beasts ; prizing things merely according to present sense or show, not examining their intrinsic natures, or looking forward into their proper fruits and consequences.

Adversity (or a state wherein we are not furnished with all accommodations grateful to sense or fancy; or wherein somewhat doth cleave to us offensive to those inferior powers of soul) is the thing which we chiefly loathe and abominate ; whereas, in true judgment, nothing commonly is more necessary, more wholesome, more useful and beneficial to us ; nothing is more needful, or conducible to the health of our soul, and to our real happiness, than it : it is the school of wisdom, wherein our minds are disciplined and improved in the knowledge of the best things, whence it is termed *παιδεία*, that is, Ps. cxix. 71. instructive chastisement^h : so David found it ; *It is,*
1 Cor. xi. 32. said he, *good for me that I have been afflicted, that* Κριμάτων ὑπὲ Κυρίου παιδεύσατα. *I might learn thy statutes ;* and our Lord himself, Heb. v. 8. ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἐπαθε, *He learned obedience from what he suffered.* It is the academy wherein virtue is acquired and exercisedⁱ; so God meant it to his

^h ————— multoque in rebus acerbis,

Acrius advertunt animos ad religionem. *Lucret.* iii. p. 64.

Καὶ γὰρ τὸν τύφον περιστῆ, καὶ τὴν ῥρημάτων ἐκκόπτει πᾶσαν ἡ Θάλη, καὶ τῷς ἰπομονῇ ἀλείφει κάκαλυπτει τὸν ἀνθρωπίνον πραγμάτων τὴν εἰτέλειαν, καὶ πολλὴν εἰσάγει τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, &c. Chrys. in 2 Cor. Orat. 26.

ⁱ Miraris tu, si Deus, ille bonorum amantissimus qui illos quam optimos esse atque excellentissimos vult, fortunam illis cum qua exerceantur assignat ? *Sen. de Prov.* 2.

people: *The Lord thy God, saith Moses, led thee* SERM.
this forty years in the wilderness, that he might XXXIX.
humble thee, and prove thee. So the Wise Man Deut. viii. 2.
saith, that by the sadness of the countenance the Eccles. vii. 3.
heart is made better; and, that stripes do cleanse Prov. xx. 30.
the inward parts of the belly. And, *It yieldeth,* Heb. xii. 11.
saith the apostle, the peaceable fruit of righteousness- James i. 3.
ness to them that are exercised thereby. Rom. v. 3.

It is the furnace of the soul, wherein it is tried, cleansed, and refined from the dross of vain conceits, of perverse humours, of vicious distempers: *When,* Job xxiii. 10.
saith Job, he hath tried me, I shall come forth as (Psal. lxvi. 10.)
gold; and, *Gold,* saith the Wise Man, *is tried in* Eccles. ii. 5.
the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of ad- Sap. iii. 5.
versity. (Isa. i. 25. xlvi. 10.
Mal. iii. 23.

It is the method whereby God reclaimeth sturdy Dan. xi. 35.)
 sinners to goodness, engageth them to seek and serve himself: so of the Israelites the prophet saith,
Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured Isa. xxvi. 16.
out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them; xxix. 19.
so Manasses, when he was in affliction he besought Hos. v. 15.
Ps. lxxviii. 34. cvi. 4,
the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly &c. lxxxiv.
before the God of his fathers; so Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Chron. 16.
after being driven from his kingdom, his under- Dan. iii. 34.
standing returned unto him, and he blessed the
Most High, and praised and honoured him that
liveth for ever; so David himself, *Before,* said he, Ps. cxix. 67.
I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept
thy word.

It is that whereby God doth prepare men, and doth entitle them to the blessed rewards hereafter:

^k Hence *τειπαρμός* (trial) is the usual word signifying it. 1 Pet. i. 6, &c.

SERM.¹ Our light affliction, saith St. Paul, which is but for
XXXIX. a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding
^{2 Cor. iv. 17.} and eternal weight of glory; and, Ye, saith St.
 Heb. x. 36. ^{ἰσχυροίς 1-} Peter, greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if
^{χειρὶ χειρίας,}
^{&c.} need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold
^{1 Pet. i. 6, 7.} temptations; that the trial of your faith, being
 much more precious than of gold that perisheth,
 though it be tried with fire, may be found unto
 praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of
 Jesus Christ. Such is the nature, such the use,
 such the fruits of adversity.

It is indeed scarce possible, that, without tasting it somewhat deeply, any man should become in good measure either wise or good^m. He must be very ignorant of himself, (of his own temper and inclinations, of the strength and forces of his reason,) who hath not met with some rubs and crosses to try himself and them with: the greater part of things he must little understand, who hath not experienced the worst part: he cannot skill to wield and govern his passions, who never had them stirred up, and tossed about by cross accidents: he can be no good pilot in matters of human life, who hath not for some time sailed in a rough sea, in foul weather, among sands and shelves: he could have no good opportunity of employing thoroughly, or improving his wit, his courage, his industry, who hath had no

¹ Ἡ γὰρ τῶν πόνων ἐπίτασις, μισθὸν ἐπίτασίς ἔστι, καὶ ἔρεισμα ἀσφαλὲς πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἑκόντας ἐκπεσεῖν· καὶ γὰρ τύφον καταστέλλει, καὶ ῥάβυρίαν ἀποστρέφει, καὶ φρονιμωτέρους ποιεῖ καὶ εὐλαβεστέρους ἐργάζεται, &c. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 9.

^m Nihil infelicius eo, cui nihil unquam evenit adversi, non licuit enim illi se experiri. Sen. de Provid. 3.

Non fert ullum ictum illæsa felicitas. *Ibid.*

straits to extricate himself from, no difficulties to sur- SERM.
 mount, no hardships to sustainⁿ: the virtues of hu- XXXIX.
 mility, of patience, of contentedness necessarily must
 be unknown to him, to whom no disgraces, no wants,
 no sore pains have arrived, by well enduring which,
 those virtues are learnt, and planted in the soul:
 scarce can he become very charitable or compassion- Non ignara
 ate to others, who never himself hath felt the smart mali misere-
 of affliction, or inconveniences of any distress; for ris succur-
 even, as the apostle teacheth us, our Saviour him- rere disco.
 self was obliged *to suffer tribulation*, that he thence Heb. ii. 17.
 might become *merciful*, and *disposed to succour* 18. iv. 15.
the afflicted. (No wonder, if he *that liveth in con-* Sam.xxv.
tinual prosperity be a Nabal, churlish and discour-³
 eous, insensible of other men's grievances:) and how
 can he express much piety or love to God, who is
 not (in submission to God's will, and for his sake)
 put to suffer any thing grievous, or want any thing
 desirable^o? When can he employ any great faith or
 hope in God, who never hath any visible need of
 succour or relief from him, who hath other present
 aids to confide in? How can he purely delight in
 God, and place his sole felicity in him? How can
 he thoroughly relish spiritual things, whose affec-
 tions are taken up by an affluence of other goods,
 whose appetites are glutted with enjoyment of other
 delights? What but deprivation of these things can
 lay open the vanity, the deceitfulness, and slipperi-

ⁿ Quæ latet, inque bonis cessat non cognita rebus,

Apparet virtus, arguiturque malis. *Ovid. Trist. iv. 3.*

^o Cum molestiae in hujus vite fragilitate crebrescant, æternam
 requiem nos desiderare compellunt. Mundus quippe iste pericu-
 losior est blandus, quam molestus, et magis cavendus quum se illi-
 cit diligi, quam cum admonet, cogitque contemni. *Aug. Ep. 144.*

SERM. ness of them ? What but crosses and disappointments here can withdraw our minds from a fond admiration, and eager affection toward this world? What but the want of these joys and satisfactions can drive us to seek our felicity otherwhere ? when Matt. xiii. ^{22.} the *deceit of riches* posseseth us, how can we judge 1 Tim. vi. 9. right of things ? when cares about them distract us, Luke x. 41. Deut. xxxii. how can we think about any thing that is good ? Prov. i. 32. ^{15.} when their snares entangle us, and their clogs encumber us, how can we be free and expedite in doing Hos. xiii. 6. Ps. xxx. 6. good ? when abundance fatteneth our hearts, and Jer. xxii. ease softeneth our spirits, and success puffeth up our Amos vi. ^{21.} &c. minds ; when pride, sensuality, stupidity, and sloth (the almost inseparable adherents to large and prosperous estates) do continually insinuate themselves into us, what wisdom, what virtue are we like to have ?

Seeing then adversity is so wholesome and useful, the remedy of so great mischiefs, the cause of so great benefits to us, why should we be displeased therewith^q? To be displeased with it, is to be displeased with that which is most needful or most convenient for us, to be displeased with the health and welfare of our souls ; that we are rescued from errors and vices, with all their black train of miseries and mischiefs ; to be displeased that we are not

^p Ardua nam res est opibus non tradere mores. *Mart.*

Munera ista fortunæ putatis ? insidiæ sunt. *Sen. Ep.* 8.

Viscata beneficia. *Ib.*

^q Gratulari et gaudere nos decet dignatione divinæ castigationis——O servum illum beatum, cuius emendationi Dominus instat ; cui dignatur irasci, quem admonendi dissimulatione non decipit. *Tert. de Pat.* 11.

'Ο ἀμαρτίαν κῆρυς μὴ κολάζηται, πάντων ἐστὶν ἀθλιώτερος, &c. Chrys.
Ἀνδρ. 5.

detained under the reign of folly and wickedness, SERM. that we are not inevitably made fools and beasts. XXXIX.
 To be disgusted with Providence for affliction or poverty, is no other than as if we should be angry with our physician for administering a purge, or for prescribing abstinence to us^r; as if we should fret at our chirurgeon for searching our wounds, or applying needful corrosives; as if we should complain of the hand which draweth us from a precipice, or *pulleth us out of the fire*. *Many benefits*, saith Jude 23. Seneca, *have a sad and rough countenance, as to burn and cut in order to healing*^s: such a benefit of God is adversity to us; and as such with a gladsome and thankful mind should we receive it.

If with a diligent observation we consult experience, we shall find, that as many have great cause to bewail that they have been rich, that they have Luke vi. 24. James v. 1. Amos vi. 1, &c. been blinded and corrupted with prosperity, that they have *received their consolation here*; so many have great reason to be glad that they have been poor, that they have been disappointed, that they have tasted the bitter cup; it having instructed and corrected them; it having rendered them sober and considerate, industrious and frugal, mindful of God, and devout toward him: and what we may rejoice in when past, why should we not bear contentedly when present? why should not the expectation of such good fruits satisfy us^t?

^r *Η νοσούντων λατρεῖαι, η ὑγιαινόντων γημασται. Simpl.

Κρείττων εἰημερίας ἀχαλινότου ἕστος φιλόσοφος. Naz. Ep. 66.

^s Beneficia multa tristein et asperam frontem habent, quemadmodum urere, et secare, ut sanes. *Sen. de Benef.* v. 20.

^t Horrorem operis fructus excusat. *Tert. Scorp.* 5.

Let our condition be what it will, we are the same. It doth

SERM. Why should not such a condition, being so plainly
XXXIX. better in itself, seem also better unto us ? We can-
not, if we are reasonable, but approve it in our judg-
ment ; why then are we not fully reconciled unto it
in our affection ?

not change us in our intrinsic worth or state. It is but a garment
about us, or as weather.

— Ego utrum

Nave ferar magna an parva, ferar unus et idem. *Hor. Ep.* ii. 2.

S E R M O N X L.

OF CONTENTMENT.

PHIL. iv. 11.

I have learned, in whatsoever state, &c.

IT further : Let our state be, as to quality, SERM.
t will, good or bad, joyful or unpleasant, we XL.
t consider, that it cannot be desperate, it may
lasting ; for there is not any necessary con-
between the present and the future : where-
the present, being momentary and transient,
le trouble us, so the future, being unknown
certain, should not dismay us. As no man
ably can be elevated with confidence in a good
resuming on its duration, (*Boast not thyself*^{Prov. xxvii.}
orrow, for thou knowest not what a day may^{1.}
forth ;) so no man should be dejected for a
e, in suspicion that it will abide long^a; seeing
(considering the frequent vicissitudes that
and the flux nature of all things here) is each
n in itself stable ; and the continuance of each
ely dependeth on God's arbitrary disposal ; and
I often doth overturn prosperity, to human
ent most firmly grounded, so he most easily
ress the to appearance most forlorn adversity;

ta intervenient quibus vicinum periculum vel prope ad-
aut subsistat aut desinat, aut in alienum caput transeat.

SERM. and he, being especially *the helper of the helpless*,
 XL. doth frequently perform it: as *he poureth contempt*
Paul. lxxii. upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the
12. cvii. 9.
x. 4. cri. 9. mighty; so he raiseth the poor out of the dust, and
Job xii. 21.
Ps. cxvii. 40. lifteth the needy out of the dunghill: he casteth
Isa. xxv. 5. down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the
Job v. 11.
Isa. ii. 11.
Psalm. xviii.
27.
Ps. cxiii. 7.
cvi. 41.
Job v. 18.
1 Sam. ii. 7. *and his hands make whole.*

Considering therefore the reason of things, and the nature of God, if our state be at present bad or sorrowful, we have more reason to hope for its amendment, than to fear its continuance^b. If indeed things went on in a fatal track, merely according to a blind and heedless chance, or a stiff and unalterable necessity; if there were no remedy from God's providence, or support by his grace to be expected; (although even then there would be no reason to grieve or complain; grief would be unreasonable, because unprofitable, complaint would be vain, because fortune and fate are deaf;) yet our infirmity might somewhat excuse that idle proceeding; but Matt. x. 29, since *not a sparrow falleth to the ground, not a*
 30. *Luke xxi. hair of our head perisheth*; nothing at all passeth otherwise than by the voluntary disposition of a most wise and gracious God; since he doth always strictly view, and is very sensible of our griefs, yea doth in a manner sympathise with them, (according to those Hos. xi. 8. pathetical expressions in the prophets: *His bowels*

^b Τοῖς γε νοῦν ἔχουσι καὶ σώφρονι λογισμῷ κεχηρυμένοις οὐδὲν τῶν ἀνθρω-

πίνων ἀδόκητον, οὐδὲν γὰρ τούτων σταθερὸν ἡ βέβαιων, &c. Theod. Ep. 14.

Sperat adversis, metuit secundis,

Alteram sortem bene præparatum pectus. Hor. Carm. ii. 10.

sound, and are troubled ; his heart is turned within him ; In all their afflictions he was afflicted :) since he further hath by promise obliged himself to care for us, to support and succour us ; we have all reason to hope, yea firmly to believe, (if at least we can find in our hearts to hope and to believe,) that we shall, as soon as it is good and expedient for us, find relief and ease ; we shall have that εὐκαίρον βοήθειαν, that seasonable succour, of which the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh.

SERM.
XL.
Jer. xxxi.
Isa. lxiii. 9,
Luke xii.
Heb. xiii. 5.
Matt. vi. 33.
Phil. iv. 6.
1 Pet. v. 7.
Psal. lv. 23.
xxxvii. 5.
Heb. iv. 6.

Hope lieth at the bottom of the worst condition that can be: *The poor, saith Job's friend, hath hope ;* and the rich can have no more; the future being equally close to both, the one can have no greater assurance to keep what he hath, than the other hath to get what he needeth; yea clearly the poor hath the advantage in the case; for God hath more declared, that he will relieve the poor man's want, than that he will preserve the rich man's store: if then we have in every condition a hope present to us, why do we *grieve as those who have no hope ?* having ever ready the best anchor that can be to rest upon, (for in this rolling sea of human affairs there is no firmer anchor than hope,) why do we let our minds be tossed with discontentful solicitudes and fears? why do we not rather, as the apostle enjoineth, *rejoice in hope, than grieve out of despair ?* why do we not, as the prophet adviseth, *hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord ?* The effect of so reposing ourselves for the future on God's providence would be perfect content and peace, according to that of the prophet, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee ; because he trusteth in thee ;* and that of the Wise Man,

1 Thess. iv.
13.
Heb. vi. 19.
Rom. xii.
Lam. iii. 26.
Isa. xxvi. 3.

SERM. *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall spring up unto him.*

XL.
 Eccl. i. 23. The truth is, and it seemeth very observable, in order to our purpose, that most discontent ariseth, not from the sense of incumbent evil, but from suspicion, or fear of somewhat to come; although God at present dispenseth a competency of food and raiment, although we are in a tolerable condition, and feel no extremity of want or pain, yet, not descrying the way of a future provision for us, answerable to our desires, we do trouble ourselves; which demeanour implieth great ignorance and infidelity^c: we think God obliged in kindness, not only to bestow upon us what is needful in its season, but to furnish us with stores, and allow us securities; we must have somewhat in hand, or we cannot trust him for the future: this is that which our Saviour cautioneth against, as the root of discontent and sign of diffi-

Matt. vi. 34. *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient to the day is the evil thereof:* an advice no less pious, than manifestly full of reason and wisdom: for what a palpable folly is it to anticipate that evil which we would avoid; then, when we earnestly desire to put off sorrow, to pull it toward us; to feel that mischief which possibly shall never be; to give it a being in our fancy which it may never have in nature^d? Could we follow this advice,

^c Πολλῆς μικροψυχίας ἔστιν ὑπὲρ τῶν ὑστερον συμβησομένων, η̄ μηδὲ ὅλως συμβησομένων τὴν ἀθυμίαν ἥδη καρποῦσθαι καὶ κόπτεσθαι. Chrys. ad Stagir. 2.

^d Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius, et ante miseriam miser.
 Sen. Ep. 18.

Ne sis miser ante tempus; cum illa quæ imminentia expavisti,

never resenting evils before they come, never pre- SERM.
judging about future events against God's providence XL.
and our own quiet; constantly depending on the
Divine care for us; not taking false alarms, and
trembling at things which shall never come near us;
not being disturbed with panic fears; no discontent
could ever seize upon us: for the present is ever
supportable; our mind cannot be overwhelmed by
the pangs of a transitory moment.

If we need further encouragement for application Lam.iii.25.
of this remedy, we have manifold experiments to Isa.xxx.18.
assure its virtue: as there are innumerable pro- xl. 31. xl ix.
mises that none who hope in God shall be dis- 23. Psal.xxv. 3.
appointed; so there are many illustrious examples xxxvii. 9.
of those, whom God hath in remarkable manner and ix. 10.
wonderful measure relieved from wants and dis- xxviii. 9.
tresses, raising them out of deepest poverty, con- Amos v. 4.
tempt, and worldly wretchedness, into most eminent Ezra.viii.22.
degrees of wealth and prosperity: *Look*, saith the Eccl. ii. 10.
Hebrew Sage, into the ancient generations, and see;
Who hath trusted in the Lord, and hath been
ashamed? Or who hath abiden in his fear, and
hath been forsaken? Or who hath invoked him,
and he did overlook (or despise) him? If we look
into those generations, we may there find Joseph,
out of slavery and out of prison, advanced to be the
chief governor of a most flourishing kingdom: Moses,
from an exile and a vagrant, made the redeemer and
commander of a populous nation: Job, out of ex-

fortasse nunquam ventura sint, certe nondum venerint, &c. *Sen.*
Ep. 13.

Quod juvat dolori suo occurrere? satis cito dolebis cum ve-
nerit. *Ibid.*

Quoties incerta erunt maria, tibi fave. *Ibid.*

SER M. treme poverty and disgrace, restored to be in wealth
XL. and honour *twice* greater than *the greatest men of*
Job xlii. 10. *the East*: Daniel, out of captivity and persecution,
i. 3. become president of the greatest monarchy on earth:
 David, raised out of great meanness to highest dig-
 nity, restored out of extreme straits into a most
 prosperous state; according to those words of ad-
Psal. lxxi. miration and acknowledgment: *O what great trou-*
18. lxix. 29. *bles and adversities hast thou shewed me; and yet*
xviii. 36. *didst thou turn and refresh me, yea and brought-*
est me from the deep of the earth again: thou hast
brought me to great honour, and comforted me on
every side. Thus hath God eminently done with
 divers; thus we may be assured that he will do
 competently with us, if with the like faith and pa-
 tience we do, as they did, rely and wait upon him.

6. But further, imagine or suppose that our con-
 dition (so irksome to us at present) will certainly
 hold on to the utmost; yet consider also that it
 soon will cease, and change of itself: since we are
 mortal, our evils cannot be perpetual, we cannot
 long be infested with them.

As it may debase and imbitter all the prosperity
 in the world, to consider that it is very fading and
 short-lived; that its splendour is but a blaze, its
Eccl. vii. 6. pleasure but a flash, its joy but as the *crackling of*
thorns; so it should abate and sweeten any adver-
 sity, to remember that it is passing away, and sud-
 denly will be gone^c. Put, I say, the worst case that
 can be: that it were certainly determined, and we
 did as certainly know it, that those things which
 cause our displeasure should continue through our

^c (Psal. xxvii. 13.) I had fainted, if I had not believed to see
 the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

whole life ; yet since our life itself will soon be spun SERM. out, and with it all our worldly evils will vanish, XL.
 why are we troubled ? What is said of ourselves must in consequence be truly applied to them : *They* ^{1 Chron.}
flee like a shadow, and continue not; they are *winds* ^{xxix. 15.}
passing and coming not again; they are *vapours* ^{Ps. lxxviii. 39.}
appearing for a little time, and then vanishing
away; they *wither like grass, and fade away as a leaf;* ^{Ps. xc. 5.}
they may die before us, they cannot outlive us; ^{Isa. xliv. 6.}
our life is but a handbreadth : and can then ^{Ps. xxxix.}
our evils have any vast bulk ? Our age is as no- ^{5.}
thing, and can any crosses therein be then any great ^{Omnia brevia tolerabilius esse debent,}
matter ? How can any thing so very short be very etiamsi
intolerable ? It is but ὀλίγον ἄρτι λυπηθέντες, being, as ^{Cic. Lel.}
St. Peter speaketh, a little while yet aggrieved ; it ^{1 Pet. i. 6.}
is but μικρὸν ὅτον ὅτον, a small quantity, whatever it
be, of time, as the apostle to the Hebrews saith, that
we need patience ; it is but τὸ παραντίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς ^{Heb. x. 36.}
θλίψεως, an affliction for a present moment ; and ^{2 Cor. iv. 17. 37.}
therefore, as St. Paul intimateth, light and inconsi-
derable, that we are to undergo. We have but a
very narrow strait of time to pass over, but we shall
land on the firm and vast continent of eternity ; when
we shall be freed from all the troublesome agitations,
from all the perilous storms, from all the nauseous
qualms of this navigation ; death (which may be very
near, which cannot be far off) is a sure haven from
all the tempests of life, a safe refuge from all the per-
secutions of the world, an infallible medicine of all the
diseases of our mind and of our state : it will enlarge
us from all restraints, it will discharge all our debts,
it will ease us from all our toils, it will stifle all our
cares, it will veil all our disgraces ; it will still all our
complaints, and bury all our disquiets ; it will wipe

SERM. all tears from our eyes, and banish all sorrow from
 XL. our hearts : it perfectly will level all conditions, setting the high and low, the rich and poor, the wise and ignorant, all together upon even ground^f; smothering all the pomp and glories, swallowing all the wealth and treasures of the world.

It is therefore but holding out a while, and all our molestation, of its own accord, will expire : time certainly will cure us ; but it is better that we should owe that benefit to reason, and let it presently comfort us^g : it is better, by rational consideration, to work content in ourselves, using the brevity and frailty of our life as an argument to sustain us in our adversity, than only to find the end thereof as a natural and necessary means of evasion from it.

Serious reflection upon our mortality is indeed, upon many accounts, a powerful antidote against discontent ; being apt to extirpate the most radical causes thereof.

Is it because we much admire these worldly things that we so much grieve for the want of them ? this will quell that admiration ; for how can we admire them, if we consider how in regard to us they are so very transitory and evanid ? How can we deem them much worth the having, when we can for so little time enjoy them, must so very soon quite part from them ?

¹ John ii.
 27.

How can we dote on the world, seeing *the world*,

^f Ἰσος χῶρος ἀπασι, πένησι τε καὶ βασιλεῦσι.

Πάντες ἴσοι νέκυες. Phocyl.

^g Κρείττον —

"Ο μέλλεις τῷ χρόνῳ χαρίζεσθαι, τοῦτο χαρίζεσθαι τῷ λόγῳ. Plut. ad Apoll.

s St. John saith, *passeth away, and the desire* SERM.
XL.

hereof. How can we value any worldly glory, since *all* ^{1 Cor. vii.} *he glory of men is,* as St. Peter telleth us, *as the* <sup>31. Eccl. i. 3,
&c.</sup> *lower of the grass;* since, as the Psalmist saith, ^{1 Pet. ii. 24.} *ian in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts* <sup>Psalm xlix.
12. lxxxii.
6.</sup> *hat perish.*

How can we *set our heart* on riches, considering <sup>Prov. xxvii.
24. xi. 4.</sup> *hat riches are not for ever, nor can,* as the Wise ^{James i. 11.} *man saith, deliver from death;* that, as St. James <sup>Luke xii.
20.</sup> *dmonisheth, The rich man fadeth in his ways;* ^{Heb. xi. 25.} *hat it may be said to any rich man, as it was to* him in the gospel, *Thou fool, this night thy life* ^{1 Cor. xv.} *hall be required of thee, and what thou hast pre-* ^{32.} *nared to whom shall it fall?* How can we fancy pleasure, seeing it is but *πρόσκαιρος ἀπόλαυσις, a very temporary fruition;* seeing, however we do *eat, or drink, or play,* it followeth, the *morrow we shall* ^{32.} *lie?*

How can we even admire any secular wisdom and knowledge, seeing that it is, as the Psalmist telleth ^{Ps. xlvi. 4.} *is, true of every man, that his breath goeth forth,* ^{Ps. xlix. 10.} *be returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish;* particularly it is seen that *wise men die no otherwise than as the foolish and brutish person perisheth;* that, as Solomon with regret observed, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither we are going.*

Do we admire the condition of those, who upon the stage do appear in the state of kings, do act the part of wealthy men, do talk gravely and wisely like judges or philosophers for an hour or two? If we do

SERM. not admire those shadows and mockeries of state,
XL. why do we admire any appearances upon this theatre
of the world, which are scarce a whit less deceitful
or more durable than they ?

Is it an envious or disdainful regret at the ad-
vantages of others before us (of others perhaps that
are unworthy and unfit, or that are, as we conceit,
no more worthy and capable than ourselves) that
gnaweth our heart ? is it that such persons are
more wealthy, more honourable, in greater favour or
repute than we, that vexeth us ? The consideration
how little time those slender preeminences will last,
may (if better remedies want due efficacy) serve to-
ward rooting out that disease : the Psalmist doth se-

^{Ps. xxxvii.} _{1, 2.} veral times prescribe it : *Fret not thyself, saith he,*
against evil doers, neither be thou envious against
the workers of iniquity ; for they shall soon be cut
down like the grass, and wither as the green herb :

^{Ps. xl ix.} _{17.} and again, *Be not afraid when one is made rich,*
and when the glory of his house is increased ; for
when he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his
glory shall not descend after him : and he, being
fallen into this scurvy distemper, did follow his own

^{Ps. lxxiii.} _{8, 17.} prescription, *I was, saith he, envious at the foolish,*
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked—until
I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood
I their end ; surely thou didst set them in slippery
places—How are they brought into desolation
as in a moment ! So likewise doth Solomon pre-

^{Prov. xxiii.} _{17, 18.} scribe : *Let not, saith he, thine heart envy sinners :*
why not ? because surely there is an end, and
thine expectation shall not be cut off : there will be
a close of his undeserved prosperity, and a good suc-

cess to thy well-grounded hope. So whatever doth breed discontent, the reflection upon our mortal and frail state will be apt to remove it.

It was that which comforted Job, and fortified his patience under so grievous pressures : *All the days of my appointed time*, said he, *I will wait till my change come* : he would not be weary while he lived of his afflictions, *because the days of man are few, and full of trouble*: if they are ^{Gen. xlviij.} *full of trouble*,⁹ and that be a saddening consideration ; yet they are few, and that maketh amends, that is comfortable.

7. I add, that it is somewhat consolatory to consider, that the worse our condition is here, the better we may hope our future state will be ; the more trouble and sorrow we endure, the less of worldly satisfaction we enjoy here, the less punishment we have to fear, the more comfort we may hope to find hereafter : for as it is a woful thing to have received *our portion*, to have enjoyed *our consolation in this life*, so it is a happy thing to have undergone our pain here. A purgatory under ground is probably a fable ; but a purgatory upon earth hath good foundations ; God is wont so to order it, that all men, that especially good men, shall undergo it : for, *What son is there whom the father doth not chasten ? All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.*^{12.}

8. A like consolation it is to consider, that wealth and prosperity are great talents, for the improvement of which we must render a strict account, so that *to whom much is given, from him much shall be required* ; so that they are, in effect, a burden, from which poverty includes an exemption : for the less we have, the less we have to do, the less we are

SERM. responsible for ; our burden is smaller, our account
XL. will be more easy.

9. I shall, in reference to our condition and the nature of those things which cause our discontent, but propose one consideration more, or ask one question : What is it that we do want, or wait for ? Is it any good we want, which by our care and industry we can procure ; is it any evil that afflicteth us, which by the like means we can evade ? If it be so, why then do we not vigorously apply ourselves to the business ^h ; why do we not, instead of idle vexation and ineffectual complaints, use the means offered for our relief ? Do we like and love trouble ? let us then be content to bear it, let us hug it and keep it close ; if not, let us employ the forces afforded us by nature, and by occasion, to repel and remove it.

Epict. iii. 24.

But if we grieve and moan, because we cannot obtain some good above our reach, or not decline some unavoidable evil, what do we thereby but palpably express our folly, and wilfully heighten our woe ; adding voluntary displeasure to the heap of necessary want or pain ; impressing more deeply on ourselves the sense of them ? in such a case patience is instead of a remedy ⁱ, which though it do not thoroughly cure the malady, yet it somewhat alleviateth it, preventing many bad symptoms, and assuaging the paroxysms thereof ^k. What booteth it

^h —— Πράγμα φέρε μηδὲ ἀγανάκτει,
 'Εᾶσθαι δὲ πρέπει, καθ' ὅτον δύῃ. Aur. Carm.

ⁱ —— Levius fit patientia

Quicquid corrigerere est nefas. Hor.

^k Animus æquus optimum est ærumnae condimentum. Plaut.
Rud.

to wince and kick against our fortune ? to do so SERM.
will inflame us, and make us foam, but will not re- XL.
lieve or ease us : if we cannot get out of the net or
the cage, to flutter and flounce will do nothing but
batter and bruise us¹.

But further, to allay our discontents, let us consider the world, and general state of men here.

1. Look *first* upon the world, as it is commonly managed and ordered by men : thou perhaps art displeased, that thou dost not prosper and thrive therein ; that thou dost not share in the goods of it ; that its accommodations and preferments are all snapt from thee ; that thy pretences are not satisfied, and thy designs fail : this thou dost take to be somewhat hard and unequal, and therefore art grieved. But if thou art wise, thou shouldst not wonder ; if thou art good, thou shouldst not be vexed hereat : for thou hast not, perhaps, any capacity for this world ; thy temper and disposition are not framed to suit with its way ; thy principles and rules do clash with it, thy resolutions and designs do not well comport with prosperity here ; thou canst not or wilt not use the means needful to compass worldly ends : thou perhaps hast a meek, quiet, modest, sincere, steady disposition ; thou canst not be pragmatical and boisterous, eager and fierce, importunately troublesome, intolerably confident, unaccountably versatile and various : thou hast certain

¹ Ἐπὶ ζημίᾳ χρημάτων, καὶ θανάτῳ, καὶ ἀφρωστίᾳ καὶ τοῖς λαικοῖς τοῖς συμπίπτουσιν ἡμῖν δεινοῖς ἀλγοῦντες καὶ ἀθυμοῦντες οὐ μόνον οὐδεμίαν ἀπὸ ταύτης καρπούμεθα παραμυθίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιτείνομεν τὰ δεινά. Chrys.
Ἀνδρ. 3.

Οἱ δὲ τῷ πάθει δουλωθέντες οὐδὲν μὲν κερδαίνουσιν ὀλοφυρόμενοι, ἀνιαρᾶς δὲ βιώσονται, καὶ παρεξιποῦσι τῶν ὅλων τὸν ἴγεινα. Theod. Ep. 15.

S E R M. pedantic notions about right and wrong, certain ro-
XL. mantic fancies about another world, (unlike to this,) which thou dost stiffly adhere to, and which have an influence upon thy actions : thou hast a squeamish conscience, which cannot relish this, cannot digest that advantageous course of proceeding ; a scrupulous humour, that hampereth thee, and curbeth thee from attempting many things which would serve thy purpose ; thou hast a spice of silly generosity, which maketh divers profitable ways of acting (such as forging and feigning, supplanting others by detraction and calumny, soothing and flattering people) to be below thee, and unworthy of thee ; thou thinkest thyself obliged, and art peremptorily resolved to observe strict rules of justice, of humanity, of charity, to speak as thou meanest, to do as thou wouldest be done to, to wrong no man anywise, to consider and tender the case of other men as thine own : thy designs are honest and moderate, conducive to (or at least consistent with) the public good, injurious or hurtful to no man ; thou carriest on thy designs by fair ways, by a modest care and harmless diligence ; nor canst be drawn to use any other, how seemingly needful soever, which do savour of fraud, violence, any sort of wrong or baseness : thou hast an honest pride and haughtiness of mind, which will not let thee condescend to use those sly tricks, crooked ways and shifts, which commonly are the compendious and most effectual ways of accomplishing designs here : thou art, in fine, (like Helvidius Priscus,) in thy dealings and proceedings, *pervicax recti*, wilfully and *peevishly honest* : such an one perhaps thou art, and such is thy way ; and canst thou hope to be any body, or get any thing

here? shall such a superstitious fop, such a conscientious simpleton, such a bashful sneaksby, so fantastic a philosopher, pretend to any thing here? No: thou art here *piscis in arido*, quite out of thy element; this world is not for *thee* to thrive in.

This world is for worldlings to possess and enjoy: *It was*, say the Rabbins, *made for the presumptuous*; and although God did not altogether design it for them, yet men have almost made it so: they are best.

qualified to thrive in it, who can lustily bustle and scramble; who can fiercely swagger and huff; who can fawn; who can wind and wriggle like a serpent; who can finely cog and gloze; who can neatly shuffle and joggle; who can shrewdly overreach and under-nine others; those slippery, wily artists, who can eer any whither with any wind; those men of im-regnable confidence, who can insist upon any pre-ences: who can be indefatigably and irresistibly urgent, nor will be repulsed or baffled by any means; those who have a temper so lax and supple, that they can bend it to any compliance advantageous to hem; who have a spirit so limber, that they can stretch it any whither; who have face enough, and onscience little enough to do any thing; who have no certain principles, but such as will sort with their nterests; no rules but such Lesbian and leaden ones, hat easily may be accommodated to their purposes; whose designs all tend to their own private advan-age, without any regard to the public, or to the ood of others; who can use any means conducible o such designs, boggling at nothing which serveth heir purpose; not caring what they say, be it true ^{39.} r false; what they do, be it right or wrong, so it eem profitable: this is called wisdom, prudence,

τὸ τῶν θεού
γαληνός εἰ
καὶ ἀτιχεῖον
καὶ πρός τὰς
τῶν βίων
οὐραφὰς
ταύτας ἀπ-
τετράσθαι.
Naz. Ep.

Quod facil-
limum fac-
tu est, pra-
vus, et cal-
lidus bonos
et modestos
anteibat.
Tac. Hist.

Ἐριάλητης
πρεσπηγοῦ
οἰδισαρτος
αὐτῷ τῷ
τινας, τῷ δὲ
τιμητ, τῷ π,
δὲ τῷ σύ
λιγιτ; τῷ
διατέτιμη.
Æl. xiii.

S E R M. dexterity, ability, knowledge of men, and of the
 XL. world, and I know not what beside; in the scripture,
 the *wisdom of the world*, and *of the flesh, craft,*
guile, deceit, κυβεία, &c. For such persons it is to

Psal. lxxiii. 12, 5, 7. flourish in this world: *Behold, these, saith the*

Psalmist, are the ungodly, who prosper in the world, and who increase in riches; they are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish: they it is who love the world, who seek it, who study and labour for it, who spend all their time, and employ all their

1 John ii. 16. care about it; and is it not fit they should have it?

Is it not a pity they should miss it? Is it not natural, that they *who sow to the flesh should reap from the flesh?* Should not they who use the proper means obtain the end? Should not they arrive at the place, who proceed in the direct road thither?

But for thee, who canst not find in thy heart to use the means, why dost thou hope to compass the end, or grieve for not attaining it? Why dost thou blend and jumble such inconsistencies together, as the eager desires of this, and the hopes of another world? It becometh not such a gallant to whine and pule. If thou wilt be brave, be brave indeed; singly, and thoroughly; be not a double-hearted mongrel: think not of satisfying thy mind, and driving on other interests together; of enjoying the conceit of being an honest man, with the design of being a rich or great man; of arriving to the happiness of the other world, and attaining prosperity in this. Wouldest thou enjoy both these? what conscience is there in that? Leave rather this world unto those who are more fit for it, who seem better to deserve

it, who venture so much, and take such pains for it; SERM. do not go to rob them of this slender reward ; but XL. with content see them to enjoy the fruits of their labour and hazard : be thou satisfied with the consequences of thy virtuous resolutions and proceedings : if it be worth thy while to live innocently, modestly, and conscientiously, do it, and be satisfied ; spoil not thine expectations by repining at the want of those things, which thy circumstances render incompatible with them : follow effectually the holy patriarchs and apostles, who, without regret, forsook all, and cheerfully went thither, whither conscience and duty called them : if thou art not willing to do so, why dost thou pretend to the same principles, ^{1 Cor. x. 13.} or hope for the like rewards ? But, leaving the consideration of the world as man hath made it, consider that this world is not, in its nature, or design, <sup>Παρατίθεντος
τον οὐρανόν
τούτην τὸν γῆν.
Job vii. 1.
(p. 106.)
Clytia. ad.
Stag. 2.</sup> a place of perfect ease and convenience, of pure delight and satisfaction. What is this world but a region of tumult and trouble ; a theatre of vanity and disasters ; the kingdom of care, of fear, of grief and pain ; of satiety, of disappointment, of regret and repentance ? we came not hither to do our will, or enjoy our pleasure ; we are not born to make laws for ourselves, or to pick our condition here : no, this world is a place of banishment from our first country, <sup>Oὐ νικηφόρος
θεμέλιος
πλάσματος
τὸν βίον, &c.
Plut. ad
Apollon.</sup> and the original felicity we were designed to ; this life is a state of travel toward another *better country*, and seat of rest ; and well it is, in such cases, (well it is, I say, for us, as exiles and travellers,) if we can find any tolerable accommodation, if we can make any hard shift : it should not be strange to us, if in this our peregrination we do meet with rough passages, foul ways, hard lodging, scant or coarse fare ; if we

SERM. complain of such things, we do not surely consider
XL. where we are, whence we came, whither we are going ; we forget that we are the sons of Adam, the heirs of sin and sorrow, who have forfeited our rest and joy upon earth ; we consider not, how unavoidable the effects are of that fatal condemnation and curse, which followed our first transgression ; we mind not that the perfection and purity of the blessings we have lost is not to be found on this side the celestial paradise^m. This world is purposely made somewhat unpleasant to us, lest we should overmuch delight in it, be unwilling to part with it, wish to set up our rest here, and say, *Bonum est esse hic, It is good for us to be here.*

This life is a state of probation and exercise, like to that (which prefigured and represented it) of God's people in the wilderness, wherein God *leadeth us*
Deut. viii. through many difficulties and hazards, in many wants and hardships, to *humble and prove us*, in order to the fitting us for another more happy stateⁿ.

No temptation therefore (or affliction) can seize
 * Πιπερασμὸς *upon us, but such as is human* * ; that is, such as is natural and proper to men : it is the consideration ἀνθρώπινος. which St. Paul useth, to comfort and support us in
1 Cor. x. 13. Eccl. xl. 1. troubles ; and a plainly good one it is : for seeing Λαζαρία ἐκ τοῦτος τοῦτος τοῦτος man, as Eliphaz saith, *is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward* ; that nothing is more natural to Job v. 7. any thing, than trouble is to us ; if we are displeased Vid. Max. therewith, we are in effect displeased that we are
Tyr. diss. 25. p. 244.

^m Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἐπίκονον φύει, καὶ μοχθηρὸς ἡμῶν τὸν βίον κατεσκεύαζεν, ἵνα ἵνδι ἐνταῦθα συνωθούμενοι θλίψεως, ἐπιθυμίαν τὸν μελλόντων λάβωμεν εἰ γὰρ νῦν, &c. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 5.

ⁿ Λογίζεσθαι χρὴ, ὅτι ὁ μὲν τῶν ἐπάθλων, καὶ τῶν στεφάνων καιρὸς, ὁ μέλλων ἔστιν αἰών· τῶν δὲ παλαιομάτων καὶ τῶν ἰδρώτων παρῶν. Chrys. ad Stagir. 2.

men ; it implieth that we gladly would put off our SERM.
nature, and cease to be ourselves ; we grieve that we XL.
are come to live in this world ; and as well might It was the
we be vexed that we are not angels, or that we are doom of
not yet in heaven, which is the only place exempt man to eat
from inconveniences and troubles, where alone *there* his bread in
is no sorrow, no clamour, no pain. sorrow all
the days of
his life.

Gen. iii. 17.

Eccl. i. 14.

It hath always been, and it will ever be, an uni- All vanity
versal complaint and lamentation, that the life of and vexa-
man and trouble are individual companions, conti- tion of spi-
nually and closely sticking one to the other ; that ^{4.} Apoc. xxi.
life and misery are but several names of the same ^{Ο βίος ἀλη-}
thing ; that our state here is nothing else but a com- ^{θῆσ σὸν βίος,}
bination of various evils, (made up of cares, of la- ^{πλάκα ζητεῖ}
bours, of dangers, of disappointments, of discords, of ^{τίνος δὲ τργύ}
disquiets, of diseases, of manifold pains and sorrows;) ^{τιλα. Eurip.}
that all ages, from wailing infancy to querulous de- ^{Quid est diu}
crepitness, and all conditions, from the careful sce- ^{vivere, nisi}
tre to the painful spade, are fraught with many great ^{diu torque-}
inconveniences peculiar to each of them ; that all the ^{πλάκη μὲν}
face of the earth is overspread with mischiefs as with ^{γῆρα γείση}
a general and perpetual deluge ; that nothing per- ^{πλάκη, πλάκη}
fectly sound, nothing safe, nothing stable, nothing ^{δὲ θάλασσα.}
serene is here to be found : this with one sad voice ^{Hesiod.}
all mankind resoundeth ; this our poets are ever
moanfully singing, this our philosophers do gravely
inculcate ; this the experience of all times loudly
proclaimeth : for what are all histories but continual
registers of the evils incident to men ? what do they
all describe, but wars and slaughters, mutinies and
seditions, tumults and confusions, devastations and
ruins ? What do they tell us, but of men furiously
striving together, circumventing, spoiling, destroying
one another ? what do we daily hear reported, but

SERM. cruel broils, bloody battles, and tragical events; great
 XL. numbers of men slain, wounded, hurried into captivity ; cities sacked and rased, countries harassed and depopulated ; kingdoms and commonwealths overturned ? what do we see before us but men carking, toiling, bickering ; some worn out with labour, some pining away for want, some groaning under pain ? And amidst so many common miseries and misfortunes, in so generally confused and dismal a state of things, is it not ridiculously absurd for us, doth it not argue in us a prodigious fondness of self-love heinously to resent, or impatiently to bemoan our particular and private crosses^o? May not reasonably that expostulation of Jeremy to Baruch reach us ?

Jer. xlvi. 4. *The Lord saith thus ; Behold, that which I have built I will break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not : for, behold, I will bring evil on all flesh.*

4. Again, if we more closely and particularly survey the states of other men, (of our brethren everywhere, of our neighbours all about us,) and compare our case with theirs, our condition hardly can appear to us so bad, but that we have many consorts and associates therein ; many as ill, many far worse bestead than ourselves. How many of our brethren in the world may we observe conflicting with extreme penury and distress ; how many undergoing

^o Ferre quam sortem patiuntur omnes
Nemo recuset. *Sen. Troad.*

Ideo mihi videtur rerum naturæ, quod gravissimum fecit, commune fecisse, ut crudelitatem fati consolaretur æqualitas. *Sen. ad Polyb. 21.*

tinual hard drudgeries to maintain their lives ; SERM.
v many sorely pinched with hunger and cold,^{XL.}
v many tortured with grievous sickness ; how
ny oppressed with debt ; how many shut up
ler close restraint ; how many detained in hor-
le slavery ; how many by the wasting rage of war
ed of their goods, driven from their homes, dis-
sessed of all comfortable subsistence ! How many,
fine, passing their lives in all the inconveniences
ude, beggarly, sordid, and savage barbarism ! And
o of us have, in any measure, tasted of these, or
the like calamities ? Yet are these sufferers, all of
m, the same in nature with us ; many of them
reason, as humility, as charity do oblige us to be-
e) deserve as well, divers of them much better
n ourselves : what reason then can we have to
ceive our case so hard, or to complain thereof ?
re we the only persons exposed to trouble, or the
gle marks of adverse fortune ; could we truly say
h the prophet, *Behold, if there be any sorrow* Lam. i. 12.
: my sorrow ; we might seem a little unhappy :
since we have so much good company in our
ceived woe ; since it is so ordinary a thing to be
r and distressed ; since *our case is*, as the poet
aketh, *not rare, but commonly known, trite, and*
won out from the heap of lots offered to men by
fune ; since pitiful objects do thus environ and
lose us ; it is plainly reasonable, humane, and just,
t we should without murmuring take and bear

P ————— Nec rara videmus

Quæ pateris : casus multis hic cognitus ac jam

Tritus, et e medio fortunæ ductus acervo. *Juv. Sat. xiii. 8.*

Te nunc delicias extra communia censes

Ponendum, &c. *Juv. Sat. xiii. 140.*

SERM. our lot : for what privilege have we to allege, that
 XL. we rather than others should be untouched by the
 grievances to which mankind is obnoxious ? Whence
 may we pretend to be the special favourites, minions,
 privadoes, and darlings of fortune ? Why may not
 God well deal with us as he doth with other men ?
 what grounds have we to challenge, or to expect,
 that he should be partial toward us ? why should we
 imagine that he must continually do miracles in our
 behalf, causing all those evils, which fall upon our
 neighbours all about, to skip over us, bedewing us,
Judg.vi.37. like Gideon's *fleece*, with plenty and joy, while all
Dan.iii.25. the earth beside is dry ; causing us, like the *three
 children*, to walk in this wide furnace, unscorched
 and unsinged by the flames encompassing us ? Are
 we not men framed of the same mould, are we not
 sinners guilty of like offences, with the meanest
 peasant, the poorest beggar, the most wretched slave ?
 if so, then a parity of fortune with any men doth
 become us, and may be due to us ; then it is a per-
 verse and unjust frowardness to be displeased with
 our lot : we may, if we please, pity the common state
 of men, but we cannot reasonably complain of our
 own ; doing so plainly doth argue, that we do un-
 measurably overprize and overlove ourselves. When
 once a great king did excessively and obstinately
 grieve for the death of his wife, whom he tenderly
 loved, a philosopher, observing it, told him, " That
 " he was ready to comfort him by restoring her to
 " life, supposing only that he would supply what was
 " needful toward the performing it." The king said,
 " He was ready to furnish him with any thing." The
 philosopher answered, " That he was provided
 " with all things necessary, except one thing :" what

that was the king demanded ; he replied, *That if* SERM.
he would upon his wife's tomb inscribe the names

XL.
of three persons, who never mourned, she presently
would revive : the king, after inquiry, told the phi-
 losopher, That he could not find one such man :
Why then, O absurdlest of all men, said the philo-
 sopher smiling, *art thou not ashamed to moan as if*
thou hadst alone fallen into so grievous a case ;
whenas thou canst not find one person that ever
was free from such domestic affliction ^q? So might
 the naming one person, exempted from incon-
 veniences, like to those we undergo, be safely proposed
 to us as a certain cure of ours ; but if we find the
 condition impossible, then is the generality of the
 case a sufficient ground of content to us ; then may ^{παρηγόρου}
 we, as the wise poet adviseth, *solace our own evils* ^{τὰ κακά δι-}
^{τρίγονα πα-}
^{κέντρα.} ^{Sen. de Ira.} ^{iii. 31.} Me-
 nand.

5. We are indeed very apt to look upward toward
 those few, who, in supposed advantages of life, (in
 wealth, dignity, or reputation,) do seem to transcend,
 or to precede us, grudging and repining at their for-
 tune; but seldom do we cast down our eyes on those
 innumerable many good people, who lie beneath us in
 all manner of accommodations, pitying their mean or
 hard condition ^r; like racers, we look forward, and
 pursue those who go before us, but reflect not back-
 ward, or consider those who come behind us : two

^q Ἡτὶ δὲ πάγτων ἀποκάτατε θρησῖς ἀναδην, ὡς μόνος ἀλγεικῷ τοσούτῳ
 συμπλακεῖς, δὲ μηδὲ ἔνα τῶν πάκοτε γεγονότων ἄμοιρον οὐδὲν πάθους ἔχων
 εὑρεῖν. Jul. Ep. 38.

^r ——Neque se majori pauperiorum

Turbae coiparet, hunc atque hunc superare laboret :

Ut cum carceribus, &c. Hor. Sat. 1.

SERM. or three outshining us in some slender piece of pro-
XL. sperity doth raise dissatisfaction in us; while the doleful state of millions doth little affect us with any regard or compassion: hence so general discontent springeth, hence so few are satisfied with their condition *, an epidemical eyesore molesting every man: for there is no man, of whatsoever condition, who is not in some desirable things outstripped by others; none is so high in fortune, but another, in wit or wisdom, in health, or strength, or beauty, in reputation or esteem of men, may seem to excel him: he therefore looking with an *evil* or envious *eye* on such persons, and with senseless disregard passing over the rest of men, doth easily thereby lose his ease and satisfaction from his own estate: whereas if we would consider the case of most men, we should see abundant reason to be satisfied with our own; if we would a little feel the calamities of our neighbours, we should little resent our own crosses; a kindly commiseration of others' more grievous disasters would drown the sense of our lesser disappointments.

If with any competent heedfulness we view persons and things before us, we shall easily discern, that what absolutely seemeth great and weighty is indeed comparatively very small and light; that things are not so unequally dispensed, but that we have our full share in good, and no more than our

* Inde fit ut nemo, qui se vixisse beatum

Dicat, &c.

Hor. Sat. 1.

Si vis gratus esse adversus Deos, et adversus vitam tuam, cogita quam multos antecesseris. *Sen. Ep. 15.*

Nunquam erit felix, quem torquebit felicior. *Sen. de Ira, iii.*
31. *Vid. ib.*

part in evil¹; that Socrates had reason to suppose, SERM. that, if we should bring into one common stock all XL.
our mishaps, so that each should receive his por- Εἰ τονίγ-
tion of them, gladly the most would take up their own & τὰς παρμένεις τὰς
own, and go their ways; that consequently it is ἀποχήσεις,
both iniquity and folly in us to complain of our ἄντες διαλ-
lot. ισθαι τὰς λύσεις, δε-
μέντης δι τοὺς πλάνους τὰς
πλάνους τὰς

6. If even we would take care diligently to compare our state with the state of those whom we are apt most to admire and envy, it would afford matter of consolation and content unto us. What is the state of the greatest persons, (of the world's princes and grandees,) what but a state encompassed with snares and temptations numberless; which, without extreme caution and constancy, force of reason, and command of all appetites and passions, cannot be avoided, and seldom are? What but a state of pompous trouble, and gay servility; of living in continual noise and stir, environed with crowds and throngs; of being subject to the urgency of business and the tediousness of ceremony; of being abused by perfidious servants and mocked by vile flatterers; of being exposed to common censure and obloquy, to misrepresentation, misconstruction, and slander; having the eyes of all men intent upon their actions, and as many severe judges as watchful spectators of them; of being accountable for many men's faults, and bearing the blame of all miscarriages about them; of being responsible, in conscience, for the miscarriages and mishaps which come from the influence of our counsels, our examples, &c. of being pestered and pursued with pretences, with suits,

¹ That at worst we are, Extremi primorum, extremis usque priores. *Hor. Epist.* ii. 2.

αὐτῶν λα-
βύρας
ἀπολθεῖν.
Plut. Apoll.
Μάγνα σερ-
ντις εῖται
μάγνη φο-
τυνα, &c.
Sen. ad Po-
lyb. 26.

SERM. with complaints, the necessary result whereof is to
XL. displease or provoke very many, to oblige or satisfy
very few; of being frequently engaged in resentments of ingratitude, of treachery, of neglects, of defects in duty, and breaches of trust toward them; of being constrained to comply with the humours and opinion of men; of anxious care to keep, and jealous fear of losing all; of danger, and being objected to the traitorous attempts of bold malecontents, of fierce zealots, and wild fanatics; of wanting the most solid and savoury comforts of life, true friendship, free conversation, certain leisure, privacy, and retiredness, for enjoying themselves, their time, their thoughts, as they think good; of satiety, and being cloyed with all sorts of enjoyments: in fine, of being paid with false coin for all their cares and pains, receiving for them scarce any thing more but empty shows of respect, and hollow acclamations of praise^t; (whence the Psalmist might well say,

Psal. Ixii. 9. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lie; a lie, for that their state cheateth us, appearing so specious, yet being really so inconvenient and troublesome.) Such is the state of the greatest men; such as hath made wise princes weary of themselves, ready to acknowledge, that if men knew the weight of a crown, none would take it up^u; apt to think with pope Adrian, who made

^t Personata felicitas. *Sen. Ep. 80.*

— Adulandi certamen est, et unum omnium amicorum officium, una contentio quis blandissime fallat. *Sen. de Benef. vi. 30.*—Vid. optime disserentem.—Vid. et de Clem. i. 19.—Et ad Polyb. 26.

^u Antigonus. Nescitis amici, quid mali sit imperare, &c. *Saturn. apud Vopisc.*

this epitaph for himself: *Here lieth Adrian the SERM. Sixth, who thought nothing in his life to have been fallen him more unhappy, than that he ruled*^x: such, in fine, their state, as upon due consideration we should, were it offered to our choice, never embrace; such indeed, as in sober judgment, we cannot Nihil difficultius quam prefer before the most narrow and inferior fortune: bene imperare. *Dio-
cetes apud Vopisc. in Aureliano.*

7. Further, it may induce and engage us to be content, to consider what commonly hath been the lot of good men in the world: we shall, if we survey the histories of all times, find the best men to have sustained most grievous crosses and troubles^y; scarce is there in holy scripture recorded any person eminent and illustrious for goodness, who hath not tasted deeply of wants and distresses. *Abraham, the father of the faithful, and especial friend of God,* was called out of his country, and from his kindred, to wander in a strange land, and lodge in tents, without any fixed habitation. Jacob spent a great part of his life in slavish toil, and in his old age was in reflection upon his life moved to say, *that the days of his pilgrimage had been few and evil.* Joseph was maligned and persecuted by his

^x Hic situs est Adrianus VI. qui nihil sibi in vita infelicius duxit, quam quod imperavit. *Lud. Guicciard. P. Jovius in vit.*

^y Consider what calamities great, powerful, glorious men have endured; Croesus, Polycrates, Pompey, &c. *Sen. de Ira*, iii. 25.

Oἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἄριστοι πενία διέζην παρὰ πάντα τὸν βίον. (Aristides, Phocion, Epaminondas, Pelopidas.) *Æl.* xi. 9, 11, 43. Lachmus, Socrates, Ephialtes, Abel, Noe, &c. *Chrys. tom. vi.* p. 107.

SER M. brethren, sold away for a slave, slandered for a most

XL. heinous crime, thrust into a grievous prison, where

Psal. cv. 18. Σὺν περιδίαις
θι, καὶ φυχὴ
θέρος. his feet were hurt with fetters, and his soul came

into iron. Moses was forced to fly away for his life,

πέριστας. Socrates, to become a vagabond in a foreign place, to feed

Cato, Regulus, Phocion, &c. sheep for his livelihood; to spend afterward the best

Magnum exemplum of his life in contesting with an obstinately perverse

nisi mala prince, and in leading a mistrustful, refractory, mu-

fortuna non tinous people, for forty years' time, through a vast

invenit. Vid. Chrys. and wild desert. Job, what a stupendous heap of

tom. v. Or. 27. p. 168. mischiefs did together fall and lie heavy upon him!

et tom. vi. Or. 10. p. 107. (Thou writest bitter things against me, he might

Job xiii. 27. 1 Sam. xxvi. 20. well say.) David, how often was he plunged in

saddest extremity, and reduced to the hardest shifts;

being hunted like a partridge in the wilderness by

an envious master, forced to counterfeit madness for

his security among barbarous infidels; dispossessed

of his kingdom, and persecuted by his own most fa-

voured son; deserted by his servants, reproached

and scorned by his subjects^y! Elias was driven long

to sculk for his life, and to shift for his livelihood in

the wilderness. Jeremy was treated as an impostor

and a traitor, and cast into a miry dungeon; finding

matter from his sufferings for his doleful lamenta-

Lam. iii. 1. tions, and having thence occasion to exclaim, I am

the man that have seen affliction by the rod of his

Acts vii. 52. wrath, &c. Which of the prophets were not per-

1 Cor. iv. and vii. secuted and misused? as St. Stephen asked. The

apostles were pinched with all kinds of want, ha-

^y Νῦν καὶ πάλαι ἔξ οὐ γεγόνασιν ἀνθρώποις ἀπαντεῖς οἱ τῷ Θεῷ φίλοι τῷ στυγῷ καὶ ἐπιμόχθῳ καὶ μυρίων γῆραις δεινῶν. ἐκληράθησαν βίφ. Chrys. in Mart. Aegypt. t. v. 522.

'Ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς ἥνθουν οἱ δίκαιοι, τοὺς ἀγίους ἀπαντας οὕτως ἤγαγεν ὁ Θεὸς διὰ θλίψεως. Chrys. in 2 Cor. Or. 27.

rassed with all sorts of toil, exposed to all manner SERM. of hazards, persecuted with all variety of contume- XL.
 lies and pains that can be imagined: above all, our Lord himself beyond expression was *a man of sor-* Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 93. *row, and acquainted with grief,* surpassing all men Isa. lxx. 3. in suffering as he did excel them in dignity and in virtue; extreme poverty, *having not so much as Matt. viii. 20.* where to lay his head, was his portion; to undergo continual labour and travel, without any mixture of carnal ease or pleasure, was his state; in return for the highest good-will and choicest benefits, to receive most cruel hatred and grievous injuries, to be loaded with the bitterest reproaches, the foulest slanders, the sorest pains which most spiteful malice could invent, or fiercest rage inflict, this was his lot: *Am I poor?* so, may one say, was he to extremity; *Am I slighted of the world?* so was he notoriously; *Am I disappointed and crossed in my designs?* so was he continually, all his most painful endeavours having small effect; *Am I deserted or betrayed of friends?* so was he by those who were most intimate, and most obliged to him; *Am I reviled, slandered, misused?* was not he so beyqnd all comparison most outrageously?

Have all these, and many more, of whom the Heb. xi. 38. world was not worthy, undergone all sorts of inconvenience, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; and shall we then disdain, or be sorry to be found in such company? Having such a cloud of martyrs, let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Is it not an honour, should it not be a comfort to us, that we do, in condition, resemble them? If God hath thus dealt with those, who of all men have been dearest to him, shall we take it

SERM. ill at his hands, that he, in any manner, dealeth so
XL. with us? Can we pretend, can we hope, can we

even wish to be used better, than God's firstborn, and our Lord himself hath been? If we do, are we not monstrously fond and arrogant? especially considering, that it is not only an ordinary fortune, but the peculiar character of God's chosen, and children, to be often crossed, checked, and corrected; even pagans have observed it, and avowed there is great

*Sen. de
Provid. c. 2.* reason for it; *God, saith Seneca, hath a fatherly mind toward good men; and strongly loveth them —therefore after the manner of severe parents, he educateth them hardly, &c.* The apostle doth in

Heb. xii. 6. express terms assure us thereof; for, *whom, saith he,* 7, 8.

the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons—but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all (that is, all good men, and genuine sons of God) are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Would we be illegitimated, or expunged from the number of God's true children? would we be divested of his special

Eccl. ii. 1. regard and good-will? if not, why do we not gladly *Tίνον, εἰ
περιέχει
δουλευτικόν κα-
ριόν, ιστίμα-
τον τὸν ψυ-
χὴν εὐει-
πιζασμόν.* embrace, and willingly sustain adversity, which is by himself declared so peculiar a badge of his children, so constant a mark of his favour? if *all good men* do, as the apostle asserteth, *partake thereof;* shall we, by displeasure at it, show that we desire to be assuredly none of that party, that we affect to be

*John xvi.
20.* discarded from that holy and happy society? *Ve-*

rily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. It is peculiarly the lot of Christians, as such, in conformity to their

Rom. viii. 29. afflicted Saviour; they are herein *predestinated to*

be conformable to his image; to this they are appointed. (Let no man, saith St. Paul, be moved by these afflictions, for ye know, that we are appointed thereunto:) to this they are called, (if when ye do well, saith St. Peter, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto were ye called,) this is propounded to them as a condition to be undertaken and undergone by them as such; they are by profession crucigeri, bearers of the cross; (if any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me; every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution:) by this are they admitted into the state of Christians; (by many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of heaven;) this doth qualify them for enjoying the glorious rewards, which their religion propoundeth; (we are coheirs with Christ; so that, if we suffer together, we shall also together be glorified with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him^z:) and shall we then pretend to be Christians, shall we claim any benefit from thence, if we are unwilling to submit to the law, to attend the call, to comply with the terms thereof? Will we enjoy its privileges, can we hope for its rewards, if we will not contentedly undergo what it requireth? Shall we arrive to the end it propoundeth, without going in the way it prescribeth, the way which our Lord himself doth lead us in, and himself hath trod before us?

^x It is a privilege of Christians, in favour bestowed on them; *ιμὸν ἐχαρίσθη.* Phil. i. 29.

Our glory. Eph. iii. 13.

Τιμονῆς ἔχετε χρέας. Heb. x. 36.

Faith and patience are consorts. Heb. vi. 12. Apoc. xiii. 10.

SERM. In fine, seeing adversity is, as hath been declared,
XL. a thing so natural to all men, so common to most
men, so incident to great men, so proper to good
men, so peculiar to Christians, we have great reason
1 Pet. iv.12. to observe the apostle's advice, *Beloved, wonder not
concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as if
some strange thing happened to you;* we should
not wonder at it as a strange or uncouth thing, that
we are engaged in any trouble or inconvenience
here; we are consequently not to be affected with it
as a thing very grievous.

S E R M O N XLI.

OF CONTENTMENT.

PHIL. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatsoever state I am, &c.

MOREOVER, considering the nature of this duty SERM.
itself may be a great inducement and aid to the XLI.
practice of it.

1. It is itself a sovereign remedy for all poverty ^{1 Tim. vi. 6.} and all sufferance; removing them, or allaying all ^{"Εστι δι μι-}
^{γας εργασίας} the mischief they can do us. It is well and truly ^{η οὐδέποτε}
^{μήτε ανθε-}
^{κτίσις. Aug.}
^{de Civ. Dei,}
Interest non qualia, sed qualis quis patiatur; It is no matter what, but how dis-
posed a man suffereth: the chief mischief any ad-
versity can do us is to render us discontent; in that
consisteth all the sting and all the venom thereof;
which thereby being voided, adversity can signify
nothing prejudicial or noxious to us; all distraction,
all distemper, all disturbance from it is by the anti-
dote of contentedness prevented or corrected. He
that hath his desires moderated to a temper suitable
with his condition, that hath his passions composed
and settled agreeably to his circumstances, what can
make any grievous impression on him, or render him
anywise miserable? he that taketh himself to have
enough, what doth he need? he that is well pleased

SERM. to be as he is, how can he be better? what can the
 XLI. largest wealth, or highest prosperity in the world, yield
more or better than satisfaction of mind? he that
 hath this most essential ingredient of felicity, is he
 not thence in effect most fortunate? is not at least
 his condition as good as that of the most pros-
 perous ^a?

2. As good, do I say? yea, is it not plainly much
 better than can arise merely from any secular pros-
 perity? for satisfaction springing from rational con-
 sideration and virtuous disposition of mind, is in-
 deed far more precious, more noble and worthy,
 more solid and durable, more sweet and delectable,
 than that which any possession, or fruition of worldly

Vid. Epist. 6. et ad Olymp. Epist. 3. (p. 75.) de Josepho. 1 Pet. iii. 4. Ecce par Deo dignum vir bonus cum mala for- tuna com- positus. Sen. de Provid. goods can afford ^b: the τὸ ἄφθαρτον τὸν πρότερον, καὶ ἡσυ- χίου πνεύματος, *incorruptibility*, as St. Peter speaketh, *of a meek and quiet spirit is before God of great price; before God*, that is, according to the most upright and certain judgment, it is the most pre- cious and valuable thing in the world; *There is*, the philosopher could say, *no spectacle more worthy of God*, (or grateful to him,) *than a good man gallantly combating with ill fortune*. Not to be dis- composed or distempered in mind, not to fret or

^a Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, dives est. *Sen. Ep. 2.*

Nemo aliorum sensu miser est, sed suo; et ideo non possunt cuiusquam falso judicio esse miseri, qui sunt vere conscientia sua beati. Nulli beatiores sunt, quam qui hoc sunt quod volunt. *Salv. de Gubern. Dei, 1.*

^b Οὐ γὰρ τὸ ποιῆσαί τι χρηστὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παθεῖν τι κακὸν πολλὰς ἔχει τὰς ἀμοιβὰς καὶ μεγάλα τὰ ἐπαθλα, &c. Chrys. ad Olymp. Ep. 3. Vid. p. 73.

Οὐδέν τῆς ἐν ἀλγηδόσιν ὑπομονῆς εἰς εὐδοκιμήσεως λόγον ἔστον· η γὰρ βα- σιλὶς τῶν ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῶν στεφάνων ἡ κορωνὶς αὕτη μάλιστά ἔστι. Chrys. ad Olymp. Ep. 16.

whine, when all things flow prosperously and according to our mind, is no great praise, no sign of wisdom, or argument of goodness; it cannot be reckoned an effect of sound judgment or virtuous affection, but a natural consequent of such a state: but when there are evident occasions and urgent temptations to displeasure, when present sense and fancy do prompt and provoke to murmuring, then to be satisfied in our mind, then to keep our passions in order, then to maintain good humour, then to restrain our tongue from complaint, and to govern our demeanour sweetly, this is indeed honourable and handsome; to see a worthy man sustain crosses, wants, disgraces, with equanimity and cheerfulness, is a most goodly sight: such a person, to a judicious mind, appeareth in a far more honourable and inviolous state, than any prosperous man; his virtue shining in the dark is far more bright and fair: *this, 1 Pet. ii. 19.* as St. Peter saith, in a like case, *is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God suffereth grief;* if, in our case, (we may say after him,) a man, out of conscientious deference to God's will, doth contentedly undergo adversity, this, God is ready to take for an obligation on himself, and will be disposed in a manner to *thank him* (or to reward him) for it: this indeed amounteth to a demonstration, that such a person is truly wise and really good: so is the satisfaction of a contented poor man more worthy^c: and it is no less more sweet and comfortable, than that of any rich man, pleasing himself in

^c Honesta res est læta paupertas. *Epic.*

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ διὰ τὸν Θεόν τι πάσχων μόνον εὐδοκιμεῖ, διλλὰ καὶ ὁ ἀδίκος τι πάσχων, καὶ φέρων γεναιάν, καὶ εὐχαριστῶν τῷ συγχωρόντι: Θεῷ αὐτὸν διάττων τοῦ διὰ τὸν Θεόν ταῦτα πάσχοντός εστιν. *Chrys.* 'Ανθρ. στ'.

SERM. his enjoyments ; contentedness satisfieth the mind
XLI. of the one, abundance doth only satiate the appetites
 of the other; the former is immaterial and sprightly,
 the complacence of a man ; the latter is gross and
 dull, like the sensuality of a beast ; the delight of
 that sinketh deep into the heart, the pleasure of this
 doth only float in the outward senses, or in the
 fancy ; one is a positive comfort, the other but a ne-
 gative indolency in regard to the mind : the poor
 good man's joy is wholly his own, and home-born, a
 lovely child of reason and virtue ; the full rich man's
 pleasure cometh from without, and is thrust into
 him by impulses of sensible objects.

Hence is the satisfaction of contented adversity
 far more constant, solid, and durable, than that of
 prosperity ; it being the product of immutable reason
 abideth in the mind, and cannot easily be driven
 thence by any corporeal impressions, which imme-
 diately cannot touch the mind ; whereas the other,
 issuing from sense, is subject to all the changes in-
 ducible from the restless commotions of outward
 causes affecting and altering sense : whence the sa-
 tisfaction proceeding from reason and virtue, the
 longer it stayeth the firmer and sweeter it groweth,
 turning into habit, and working nature to an agree-
 ment with it ; whereas usually the joys of wealth
 and prosperity do soon degenerate into fastidious-

Apoc. x. 10. ness, and terminate in bitterness ; being *honey in Job xx. 20,* *the mouth,* but soon becoming *gall in the bowels.* 22.

Nothing indeed can affect the mind with a truer
 pleasure, than the very conscience of discharging
 our duty toward God in bearing hardship, imposed
 by his providence, willingly and well. We have
 therefore much reason not only to acquiesce in our

straits, but to be glad of them, seeing they do yield us an opportunity of immediately obtaining goods more excellent and more desirable, than any prosperous or wealthy man can easily have, since they furnish us with means of acquiring and exercising a virtue worth the most ample fortune; yea justly preferable to the best estate in the world; a virtue, which indeed doth not only render any condition tolerable, but sweeteneth any thing, yea sanctifieth all states, and turneth all occurrences into blessings.

3. Even the sensible smart of adversity is by contentedness somewhat tempered and eased; the stiller and quieter we lie under it, the less we feel its violence and pungency: it is tumbling and tossing that stirreth the ill humours, and driveth them to the parts most weak, and apt to be affected with them; the rubbing of our sores is that which inflameth and exasperateth them: where the mind is calm, and the passions settled, the pain of any grievance is in comparison less acute, less sensible.

4. Whence, if others in our distress are uncharitable to us, refusing the help they might or should afford toward the rescuing us from it, or relieving us in it, we hereby may be charitable and great benefactors to ourselves; we should need no anodyne to be ministered from without, no succour to come from any creature, if we would not be wanting to ourselves, in hearkening to our own reason, and enjoying the consolation which it affordeth. In not doing this, we are more uncharitable and cruel to ourselves, than any spiteful enemy or treacherous friend can be; no man can so wrong or molest us, as we do ourselves, by admitting or fostering discontent.

5. The contented bearing of our condition is also

~~SEN.~~ the most hopeful and ready means of bettering it,
 XLI. and of removing the pressures we lie under.

It is partly so in a natural way, as disposing us to embrace and employ the advantages which occur conducible thereto: for as discontent blindeth men, so that they cannot descry the ways of escape from evil, it dispiriteth and discourageth them from endeavouring to help themselves, it depriveth them of many succours and expedients, which occasion would afford for their relief; so he that being undisturbed in his spirit hath his eyes open and his courage up, and all his natural powers in order, will be always ready and able to do his best, to act vigorously, to snatch any opportunity, and employ any means toward the freeing himself from what appeareth grievous to him.

Upon a supernatural account, content is yet more efficacious to the same purpose: for cheerful submission to God's will doth please him much, doth strongly move him to withdraw his afflicting hand, doth effectually induce him to advance us into a most comfortable state: of all virtues, there is none more acceptable to God than patience. God will take it well at our hands if we do contentedly receive from his hand the worst things: it is a monstrous thing not to receive prosperity with grateful sense, but it is heroical with the same mind to re-

Chrys. tom. ceive things unpleasant: he that doth so ζημιῶται
 vi. Or. 89.
 Vid. Chrys. μὲν ὡς ἀνθρώπος, στεφανοῦται δὲ ὡς φιλόθεος, *he suffereſt
 ad. Stag. 1.
 et 2.
 (p. 106.)* loss as a man, but is crowned as a lover of God.

Besides that, it is an unreasonable thing to think of enjoying both rest and pleasure here, and the rewards hereafter; our consolation here with Dives, and our refreshment hereafter with Lazarus.

Be humbled, saith St. Peter, *under the mighty SERM. hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time,* ^{XLI.} (*εν καιρῷ, when it is opportune and seasonable;*) and, ^{1 Pet. v. 6.} *Be humbled*, saith St. James, *before the Lord, and Jam. iv. 10. he will exalt you*; and, *When, saith Job's friends, Job xxii. 29. men are cast down, then thou shalt say there is* ^(Luke xiv. 11. xviii.) *lifting up, and he will save the humble person.* ^(14.)

God with favourable pity hearkeneth to the groans of them who are *humbly contrite* under his hand, ^{Isa. lxvi. 2.} and reverently tremble at his word; he reviveth the ^{lvi. 15. Ps. xxxiv. 8. li. 17. calvii. 3.} *spirit of the humble*; he is nigh to the broken of heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit; he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds; he proclaimeth *blessedness to the poor in spirit*, ^{Matt. v. 3.} and to those that mourn, because they ⁴ shall find comfort and mercy: all which declarations and promises are made concerning those who bear adversity with a submiss and contented mind; and we see them effectually performed in the cases of Ahab, of the Ninevites, of Nebuchadnezzar, of Manasses, of Hezekiah, of David; of all persons mentioned in holy scripture, upon whom adversities had such kindly operations. But discontent and impatience do offend God, and provoke him to continue his judgments, yea to increase the load of them: to be sullen and stubborn is the sure way to render our condition worse and more intolerable: for, *who hath hardened himself against God and prospered?* ^{Job ix. 4. Jer. ii. 30. Isa. ix. 13. i. 5. xxvi. 10.} The Pharaohs and Sauls, and such like persons, who rather would break than bend, who, being dissatisfied with their condition, chose rather to lay hold on other imaginary succours, than to have recourse to God's mercy and help; those, who (like the refractory Israelites) have been *smitten in vain*

SERM. as to any quiet submission or conversion unto God,
XLI. what have they but plunged themselves deeper into
wretchedness ?

It is indeed to quell our haughty stomach, to check our froward humour, to curb our impetuous desires, to calm our disorderly passions, to suppress our fond admiration and eager affection toward these worldly things, in short, to work a contented mind in us, that God ever doth inflict any hardships on us, that he crosseth us in our projects, that he detaineth us in any troublesome state ; until this be achieved, as it is not expedient that we should be eased, as relief would really be no blessing to us ; so God (except in anger and judgment) will nowise grant or dispense it ; it would be a cruel mercy for him to do it. If therefore we do wish ever to be in a good case as to this world, let us learn to be contented in a bad one : having got this disposition firmly rooted in our hearts, we are qualified for deliverance and preferment ; nor will God fail in that due season to perform for us what he so often hath declared and promised ; his nature disposeth him, his word hath engaged him to help and comfort us.

These are the most proper inducements unto contentedness, which, considering (in the light of reason and holy scripture) the nature of the thing, suggested unto my meditation : there are beside some other means advisable, (some general, some more particular,) which are very conducive to the production of content, or removing discontent; which I shall touch, and then conclude.

1. A constant endeavour to live well, and to maintain a good conscience : he that doth this can hardly be dismayed or disturbed with any occurrence here ;

this will yield a man so ample and firm a satisfaction SERM.
of mind, as will bear down the sense of any incum- XLI.
bent evils ; this will beget such hope in God, and so
good assurance of his favour, as will supply the want
of all other things, and fully satisfy us, that we have
no cause to be troubled with any thing here ; he that
by conscientious practice hath obtained such a hope,
is prepared against all assaults of fortune with an
undaunted mind and force impregnable ; *He will,* ^{Ps. cxii.}
^{1. cxix. 6.} as the Psalmist saith, *not be afraid of any evil
tidings, for his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.*
Maintaining this will free us from all anxious care,
transferring it upon God ; it will breed a sure confi-
dence, that he will ever be ready to supply us with
all things convenient, to protect and deliver us from
all things hurtful ; ensuring to us the effect of that
promise, by the conscience of having performed the
condition thereof : *Seek ye first the kingdom of God* ^{Matt. vi. 33.}
*and its righteousness, and all these things shall be
added unto you.*

This was that which supported the apostles and
kept them cheerful under all that heavy load of dis-
tresses which lay upon them ; *Our rejoicing is this,* ^{1 Cor. i. 12.}
^{1 Pet. iii.} could they say, *the testimony of our conscience, that* ^{16.}
in simplicity and godly sincerity—we have had our ^{Acts xxiii.}
^{1. xxiv. 16.} *conversation in this world.*

It is the want of this best pleasure, that both ren-
dereth the absence of all other pleasures grievous,
and their presence insipid : had we a good conscience,
we could not seem to want comfort ; as we could not
truly be unhappy, so we could hardly be discontent ;
without it, no affluence of other things can suffice to
content us. It is an evil conscience that giveth an
edge to all other evils, and enableth them sorely to

SERM. afflict us, which otherwise would but slightly touch
XLI. us ; we become thence uncapable of comfort, seeing
not only things here upon earth to cross us, but
heaven to lower upon us ; finding no visible succour,
and having no hope from the power invisible ; yea
having reason to be discouraged with the fear of
God's displeasure. As he that hath a powerful
enemy near cannot abide in peace, without anxious
suspicion and fear ; so he that is at variance with
the Almighty, who is ever at hand, ready to cross
and punish him, what quiet of mind can he enjoy ?
There is no peace to the wicked.

2. The contemplation of our future state is a sovereign medicine to work contentedness and to cure

¹ Thess. iv. discontent : as discontent easily doth seize upon, and
18. cleaveth fast to souls, which earnestly do pore and
Vid. Naz. dote upon these present things, which have in them
Ep. 201. nothing satisfactory or stable ; so if we can raise our
(ad The- minds firmly to believe, seriously to consider, and
clam.) worthily to prize the future state and its concerns-
ments, we can hardly ever be discontent in regard
to these things. Considering heaven and its hap-
piness, how low and mean, how sordid and vile, how
unworthy of our care and our affection, will these

² Cor. vii. inferior things appear ! how very unconcerned shall
31. we see ourselves to be in them, and how easily thence
shall we be content to want them ! What, shall any
of us be then ready to say, doth it concern me in
what rank or garb I pass my few days here ? what
considerable interest can I have in this uncertain
and transitory state ? what is any loss, any disgrace,
any cross in this world to me, who am a citizen of
heaven, who have a capacity and hope of the im-
mense riches, the incorruptible glories, the perfect

and endless joys of eternity ? This was that which SERM. sustained the holy apostles in all their distresses ; *For* XLI. *this cause*, saith St. Paul, *we faint not—while we look* ^{2 Cor. iv.} *not on the things which are seen, but on the things* ^{16. &c. v.} *which are not seen ; for the things which are seen* ^{18.} *are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal :* and, *I reckon,* saith he again, *that the suf-* ^{Rom. viii.} *ferings of this present life are not worthy to be com-* ^{18.} *pared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

If likewise we do with faith and seriousness consider the dismal state below of those, who are eternally secluded from all joy and bliss, who are irrecoverably condemned to utter darkness and the extremity of horrible pain, how tolerable, how pleasant, how very happy will the meanest state here appear to be ! how vain a thing will it then seem to us to be, to dislike, or to be troubled with any worldly thing ; to account any chance happening to us to be sad or disastrous ! What, shall we say then, each of us, is this same loss to the loss of my soul and all its comforts for ever ? what is this want to the perpetual want of heavenly bliss ? what is this short and faint pain to the cruel pangs of endless remorse, to the *weeping and gnashing of teeth in outward darkness, to everlasting burnings ?*

Thus infinitely silly and petty must all concerns of this life appear to him, who is possessed with the belief and consideration of matters relating to the future state ; whence discontent, in regard to them, can hardly find access to his mind.

3. Constant devotion is an excellent instrument and guard of content, an excellent remedy and fence against discontent.

It is such in way of impetration, procuring the

SERM. removal or alleviation of our crosses : for God hath
XLI. promised that *he will give good things to those that ask him ; The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth ; he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him ; he also will hear their cry, and will save them. The poor man crieth, and the Lord heareth him, and saveth him out of all his troubles* ; the holy scripture is full of such declarations and promises, assuring us of succour from our distresses upon our supplication to God ; whence St. Paul thus Phil. iv. 7. adviseth against all solicitude : *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God : and* (addeth, signifying the consequence of this practice) *the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.*

It likewise performeth the same by procuring grace and aid from God, which may enable and dispose us to bear all evils well, which is really much better than a removal of them ; for that hence they become wholesome and profitable to us, and causes of present good, and grounds of future reward : thus 2 Cor. xii. 9. when St. Paul *besought God* for deliverance from 1 Cor. x. 13. his thorn in the flesh, the return to him was ; *My grace is sufficient for thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness* : it was a greater favour to receive an improvement of spiritual strength, occasioned by that cross, than to be quite freed from it.

Devotion also hath immediately of itself a special efficacy to produce content. As in any distress it is a great consolation, that we can have recourse to a good friend, that we may discharge our cares and

our resentments into his bosom ; that we may demand advice from him, and, if need be, request his succour ; so much more it must be a great comfort, that we can in our need approach to God, who is infinitely the most faithful, the most affectionate, the most sufficient friend that can be ; always most ready, most willing, most able to direct and to relieve us : he desires and delights, that *in the day of our trouble we should seek him* ; that *we should pour forth our hearts before him* ; that we should *cast our burdens and our cares upon him* ; that we should, upon all occasions, implore his guidance and aid : and complying with his desires, as we shall assuredly find a successful event of our devotions, so we shall immediately enjoy great comfort and pleasure in them.

SERM.
XLI.

Psal. lxxvii. 2. xxvii. 8.
cv. 4. lxii. 8.
1 Sam. i. 15.
Psal. iv. 22.
1 Pet. v. 7.
Psal. v. 8.
xxvii. 11.
xxxii. 3.
xliii. 3.
cxxxix. 24.
cxliii. 10.
lxi. 2.
Jer. xxxi. 9.

The *God of all consolation* doth especially by this channel convey his comforts into our hearts ; his very presence (that *presence*, in which the Psalmist saith *there is fulness of joy*) doth mightily warm Ps. xvi. 11. and cheer us ; his Holy Spirit doth, in our religious intercourse with him, insinuate a lightsome serenity of mind, doth kindle sweet and kindly affections, doth scatter the gloomy clouds of sadness ; practising it, we shall be able to say with the Psalmist, *In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.*

Humbly addressing ourselves to God, and reverently conversing with him, doth compose our minds and charm our passions, doth sweeten our humour, doth refresh and raise our spirits, and so doth immediately breed and nourish contentedness.

It also strengtheneth our faith, and quickeneth our hope in God, whereby we are enabled to support Isa. xxvi. 3.

SERM. our present evils, and peace of mind doth spring up
XLJ. within us.

Psal. lxxiii.
26. lxix. 16.
xxiii. 4.
lxxi. 20. It inflameth our love unto God, in sense of his gracious illapses, thence rendering us willing to endure any want or pain for his sake, or at his appointment.

It, in fine, doth minister a ravishing delight, abundantly able to supply the defect of any other pleasures, and to allay the smart of any pains whatever; rendering thereby the meanest estate more acceptable and pleasant than any prosperity without it can be. So that if we be truly devout, we can hardly be discontent; it is discosting from God, by a neglect of devotion or by a negligence therein, that doth expose us to the incursions of worldly regret and sorrow.

These are general remedies and duties both in this and all other regards necessary, the which yet we may be induced to perform in contemplation of this happy fruit (contentedness) arising from them. Further,

4. It serveth toward production of contentedness to reflect much upon our imperfection, unworthiness, and guilt; so as thereby to work in our hearts a lively sense of them, and a hearty sorrow for them: this will divert our sadness into its right channel, this will drown our lesser grief by the influx of a greater. It is the nature of a greater apprehension or pain incumbent to extinguish in a manner, and swallow up the sense of a lesser, although in itself grievous; as he that is under a fit of the stone doth scarce feel a pang of the gout; he that is assaulted by a wolf will not regard the biting of a flea. Whereas then, of all evils and mischiefs, moral evils

are incomparably far the greatest, in nature the most SERM.
ugly and abominable, in consequence the most hurt- XLI.
ful and horrible; seeing, in St. Chrysostom's lan-
guage, *excepting sin, there is nothing grievous or οὐδὲ τὸν ἀρρω-
τερὸν among human things; not poverty, not τὸν πτώσην, δὲ τὸν
sickness, not disgrace, not that which seemeth the ἡ ἀμερία
most extreme of all evils, death itself; those being μορθὴ οὐ τε-
names only among such as philosophate, names of σὺν ἴσχυσι,
calamity, void of reality; but the real calamity this, &c.* Chrys.
to be at variance with God, and to do that which ^{Ariq. i. v. 6.} Vid. ad
displeaseth him; seeing evidently, according to just ^{13. ad} Olymp. Ep.
estimation, no evil beareth any proportion to the Theod. 1.
evil of sin; if we have a due sense thereof we can
hardly be affected with any other accident; if we
can keep our minds intent upon the heinous nature
and the lamentable consequences of sin, all other
evils cannot but seem exceedingly light and incon-
siderable; we cannot but apprehend it a very silly
and unhandsome thing to resent or regard them:
what, shall we then judge, is poverty, in comparison
to the want of a good conscience? what is sickness,
compared to distemper of mind and decay of spi-
ritual strength? what is any disappointment, to the
being defeated and overthrown by temptation? what
any loss, to the being deprived of God's love and
favour? what any disgrace, to the being out of
esteem and respect with God? what any unfaithful-
ness or inconstancy of friends, to having deserted or
betrayed our own soul? what can any danger signify
to that of eternal misery, incurred by offending God?
what pressure can weigh against the load of guilt,
or what pain equal that of stinging remorse? in fine,
what condition can be so bad as that of a wretched
sinner? any case surely is tolerable, is desirable, is

SERM. lovely and sweet, in comparison to this: would to
 XLI. God, may a man in this case reasonably say, that I
 were poor and forlorn as any beggar; that I were
 covered all over with botches and blains as any
 lazarus; that I were bound to pass my days in an
 hospital or a dungeon; might I be chained to an
 oar, might I lie upon the rack, so I were clear and
 innocent: such thoughts and affections, if reflecting
 on our sinful doings and state do suggest and im-
 press, what place can there be for resentment of
 other petty crosses?

^{2 Cor. vii.} ^{10.} Contrition also upon this score is productive of a
 certain sweetness and joy, apt to quash or to allay
 all worldly grief: as *it worketh a salutary repent-
 ance not to be repented of*, so it therewith breedeth
 a satisfactory comfort, which doth ever attend re-
 pentance: he that is very sensible of his guilt, can-
 not but consequently much value the remedy there-
 of, mercy; and thence earnestly be moved to seek
 it; then, in contemplation of divine goodness, and
 considering God's gracious promises, will be apt to
 conceive faith and hope, upon his imploring mercy,
 and resolution to amend; thence will spring up a
 cheerful satisfaction, so possessing the heart, as to
 expel or to exclude other displeasures: a holy and a
 worldly sadness cannot well consist together.

5. Another good instrument of contentedness is
 sedulous application of our minds to honest employ-
 ment. Honest studies and cares divert our minds,
 and drive sad thoughts from them: they cheer our
 spirits with wholesome food and pleasant entertain-
 ments; they yield good fruits, and a success accom-
 panied with satisfaction, which will extinguish or
 temper discontent: while we are studious or active,

discontent cannot easily creep in, and soon will be SERM.
stifled. XLI.

Idleness is the great mother and the nurse of discontent: it layeth the mind open for melancholy conceits to enter; it yieldeth harbour to them, and entertainment there; it depriveth of all the remedies and allays which business affordeth.

Reciprocally, discontent also begetteth idleness, *Mater me-*
genuit. and by it groweth; they are like ice and water, arising each out of the other: we should therefore not suffer any sadness so to encroach upon us, as to hinder us from attending to our business, (the honest works and studies of our calling,) for it thereby will grow stronger and more hardly vincible.

6. A like expedient to remove discontent is *Ἄγαθὴ καὶ σαμαρεῖας ιερούς τετταίσιν.* good company. It not only sometimes ministereth advices and arguments for content, but raiseth the drooping spirit, erecting it to a loving complaisance, drawing it out towards others in expressions of kindness, and yielding delight in those which we receive from others, infecting us by a kind of contagion with good humour, and instilling pleasant ideas into our fancy, agreeably diverting us from sad and irksome thoughts: discontent affecteth retirement and solitude, as its element and food; good company partly starveth it by smothering sad thoughts, partly cureth it by exhilarating discourse. No man hardly can feel displeasure, while friendly conversation entertaineth him; no man returneth from it without some refreshment and ease of mind.

7. Having right and lowly conceits of ourselves is a most sure guardian and procurer of content: for answerable to a man's judgment of himself are his resentments of the dealing he meeteth with from God

SERM. or man. He that thinks meanly, as he ought, of himself, will not easily be offended at any thing : any thing, will he think, is good enough for me ; I deserve nothing from God, I cannot deserve much of man ; if I have any competence of provision for my life, any tolerable usage, any respect, it is more than my due, I am bound to be thankful. But he that conceiteth highly (that is, vainly) of himself, nothing will satisfy him ; nothing, thinks he, is good enough for him, or answerable to his deserts ; nobody can yield him sufficient respect ; any small neglect disturbeth and enraged him : he cannot endure that any man should thwart his interest, should cross his humour, should dissent from his opinion ; hence, seeing the world will not easily be induced to conceit of him as he doth of himself, nor to comply with his humours and pretences, it is impossible that he should be content.

8. It conduceth to this purpose to contemplate and resent the public state of things, the interest of the world, of our country, of God's church. The sense of public calamities will drown that of private, as unworthy to be considered or compared with them ; the sense of public prosperity will allay that of particular misfortune. How (will a wise and good man say) can I desire to prosper and flourish, while the state is in danger or distress ? how can I grieve, seeing my country is in good condition ? is it just, is it handsome, that I should be a nonconformist either in the public sorrow or joy ? Indeed,

9. All hearty charity doth greatly alleviate discontent. If we bear such a good-will to our neighbour, as to have a sincere compassion of his evils and complacence in his good, our case will not much afflict us. If we can appropriate and enjoy the pro-

sperity, the wealth, the reputation, of our neighbour, SERM.
by delighting in them, what can we want, what can XLI.
displease us ? if our heart is enlarged in pity for the
misfortunes of others, it cannot be contracted with
grief for our own : our sorrow, like water, being
thus diffused, cannot be so deep, but it will be more
fruitful ; it will produce such effects as will comfort
and please us : it is a stingy selfishness which maketh
us so very sensible of crosses and so uncapable of
comfort.

10. Again, if we will attain contentment, we must take heed of setting our affection upon any worldly thing whatever, so as very highly to prize it, very passionately to affect it, very eagerly to pursue it ; so as to conceive our happiness in any measure to hang on it or stick thereto : if there be any such thing, we shall be disappointed in the acquist or the retention of it ; or we shall be dissatisfied in its enjoyment.

So to adhere in affection to any thing is an adulterous disloyalty toward our Maker and best Friend, from which it is expedient that we should be reclaimed ; whence God, in just anger or in kind mercy, will be apt to cross us in our attempts to get it, or to deprive us of its possession ; whence the displeasure will follow, which always attendeth a separation from things we love. But if we be suffered to obtain or to retain it, we shall soon find dissatisfaction therein ; being either disgusted with some bitterness in it, (such as doth lurk in every sensible good,) or being cloyed with its lusciousness : it after a small enjoyment will become either distasteful or insipid.

This, according to continual experience, is the

SERM. nature of all things, pleasant only to sense or fancy,
XLI. presently to satiate : no beauty can long please the eye, no melody the ear, no delicacy the palate, no curiosity the fancy ; a little time doth waste away, a small use doth wear out the pleasure which at first they afford : novelty commendeth and ingratiateth them ; distance representeth them fair and lovely ; the want or absence of them rendereth them desirable ; but the presence of them dulleth their grace, the possession of them deadeneth the appetite to them.

New objects with a gentle and grateful touch warble upon the corporeal organs, or excite the spirits into a pleasant frisk of motion ; but when use hath levigated the organs, and made the way so smooth and easy that the spirits pass without any stop, those objects are no longer felt, or very faintly ; so that the pleasure ceaseth.

Only those things which reason (religious and sound reason) doth approve, do yield a lasting (un-decaying, unalterable) satisfaction ; if we set our affections on them, we cannot fail of content : in seeking them, we cannot be disappointed ; for God (without any reservation or exception) hath promised to bestow them upon those who seriously and diligently seek them : nor can we be dispossessed of them ; God will not take them away, and they lie beyond the reach of any other hand : having them, then, we cannot but fully and durably be satisfied in the fruition of them : the longer we have them, the more we shall like them ; the more we taste them, the better we shall relish them : time wasteth not, but improveth the sense of their unfading beauty and indefectible sweetness.

11. It is of great influence toward contentedness SERM.
with an earnest and impartial regard to contemplate ~~things~~ ^{XLI.}
things as they are in themselves, divested of tragical
appearances, in which they are wrapt by our own
inconsiderate fancy, or which vulgar prejudices do
throw upon them : as all things, looked upon by the
corporeal eye through a mist, do seem bigger than in
reality they are ; so to the eye of our mind all things
(both good and evil) seem hugely enlarged, when
viewed through the fogs of our dusky imagination
or of popular conceit. If we will esteem that very
good, which with a gay appearance dazzleth our
imagination, or which the common admiration and
applause of men recommendeth, the most vain and
worthless, the most dangerous, the most mischievous
things often will appear such : and if we please to
account those things greatly bad, which look ugly or
horridly to imagination, which are defamed by the
injudicious part of men, or which men commonly do
loathe, do fret at, do wail for, we shall take the best,
most innocent, most useful, most wholesome things
for such ; and accordingly these errors of our minds
will be followed by a perverse practice, productive
of dissatisfaction and displeasure to us. No man
ever will be satisfied, who values things according
to the price which fancy setteth on them, or accord-
ing to the rate they bear in the common market ;
who distinguisheth not between good and famous,
bad and infamous ; who is affected accordingly with
the want of those things which men call good, with
the presence of those which they term bad.

But if we judge of things as God declareth, as im-
partial and cautious reason dictateth, as experience
diligently observed (by their fruits and consequences)

SERM. discovereth them to be, we shall have little cause to
XLI. be affected by the want or presence of any such thing
which is wont to produce discontent.

12. We should to this purpose take especial care to search out through our condition, and pick thence the good that is therein, making the best we can of it, enjoying and improving it; but what is inconvenient or offensive therein declining it, diminishing it, tempering it so well as we may, always forbearing to aggravate it. There are in nature divers simples, which have in them some part or some juice very noxious, which being severed and cast away, the rest becometh wholesome food; neither indeed is there any thing in nature so venomous, but that from it, by art and industry, may be extracted somewhat medicinal and of good use when duly applied; so in most apparent evils lieth enclosed much good, which if we carefully separate, (casting away the intermixed dross and refuse,) we shall find benefit, and taste comfort thence; there is nothing so thoroughly bad, as, being well ordered and opportunely ministered, will not do us much good: so if from poverty we cast away or bear quietly that which a little pincheth the sense or grateth on the fancy, and enjoy the undistractedness of mind, the liberty, the leisure, the health, the security from envy, obloquy, strife, which it affordeth, how satisfactory may it become to us! The like conveniences are in disgrace, disappointment, and other such evils, which being improved may endear them to us: even sin itself (the worst of evils, the only true evil) may yield great benefits to us; it may render us sober and lowly in our own eyes, devout in imploring mercy, and thankful to God for it; merciful and charitable toward

others in our opinions and censures ; more laborious SERM.
in our good practice, and watchful over our steps : XLI.
and if this deadly poison well administered yieldeth
effects so exceedingly beneficial and salutary, what
may other harmless (though unhandsome and un-
pleasant) things do, being skilfully managed !

13. It is a most effectual means of producing content, and curing discontent, to rouse and fortify our faith in God, by, with most serious attention, reflecting upon the arguments and experiments, which assure us concerning God's particular providence over all, over us. It is really infidelity (in whole or in part, no faith, or a small and weak faith) which is at the root, as of all sin, so particularly of discontent: for how is it possible, did we firmly believe, and with any measure of attention consider, that God taketh care of us, that he tendereth our good, that he is ready at hand to succour us, (how then, I say, is it possible,) that we should fear any want, or grievously resent any thing incident ? But we, like St. Peter, are ὀλιγόπιστοι, *of little faith*, therefore we cannot *walk on the sea*, but in despair sink down : sometimes our faith is buried in oblivion or carelessness ; we forget, or mind not that there is a Providence ; but look on things as if they fell out casually or fatally ; thence expect no redress from Heaven, so tumble into despair and disconsolateness. Sometimes, because God doth not in our time and our way relieve us or gratify us, we slip into profane doubt, questioning in our hearts whether he doth indeed regard us, or whether any relief is to be expected from him ; not considering, that only God can tell when and how it is best to proceed ; that often it is not expedient our wishes should be granted ; that we

SERM. are not wise enough or just enough to appoint or
XLI. choose for ourselves; that it is impossible for God
 to gratify every man; that it would be a mad world,
 if God in his government thereof should satisfy all
 our desires.

We forget how often God hath succoured us in
 our needs and straits, how continually he hath pro-
 vided for us, how patiently and mercifully he hath
 borne with us, what miracles of bounty and mercy he
 Ps. lxxviii. hath performed in our behalf; we are like that dis-
^{42.}
 Psal. cvi. 7, trustful and inconsiderate people, who *remembered*
^{13, 21.} *not the hand of God, nor the day when he delivered*
them; remembered not the multitude of his mercies;
but soon forgat his works, and waited not for his
counsel; They forgat God their Saviour, who had
done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in
the land of Ham, and terrible things in the Red
sea.

Psal. xxii. From such dispositions in us our discontents do
^{19. xlvi. 1.} lxxxii. 1. spring; and we cannot cure them, but by recollect-
^{1.} lxxix. 1. ing ourselves from such forgetfulness and negli-
^{1.} lxx. 7. cxliv. gence; by shaking off such wicked doubts and dis-
^{1.} Psal. lxxiiii. 26. xxvii. 1. cxi. 7. trusts; by fixing our hearts and hopes on him who
 alone can help us; who is *our strength, the strength*
of our heart, of our life, of our salvation.

Of him (to conclude) let us humbly implore, that
 he in mercy would bestow upon us grace to submit
 in all things to his will, to acquiesce in all his dis-
 pensations, gladly to embrace and undergo what-
 ever he ~~allot~~teth to us; in every condition, and for
 all events befalling us, heartily to adore, thank, and
 bless him; even so to the ever blessed God, our gra-
 cious Maker and Preserver, be eternally rendered all
 glory, thanksgiving, and praise. Amen.

S E R M O N X L I I .

OF PATIENCE.

1 PET. ii. 21.

*Because also Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example,
that ye should follow his steps.*

IN these words two things appear especially observable; a duty implied, (*the duty of patience,*) and a reason expressed, which enforceth the practice of that duty, (*the example of Christ.*) We shall, using no more preface or circumstance, first briefly, in way of explication and direction, touch the duty itself, then more largely describe and urge the example.

The word *patience* hath, in common usage, a double meaning, taken from the respect it hath unto two sorts of objects, somewhat different. As it respecteth provocation to anger and revenge by injuries or discourtesies, it signifieth a disposition of mind to bear them with charitable meekness; as it relateth to adversities and crosses disposed to us by Providence, it importeth a pious undergoing and sustaining them. That both these kinds of patience may here be understood, we may, consulting and considering the context, easily discern: that which immediately precedeth, *If when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God,* relateth to good endurance of adversity; that which presently followeth, *who when he was*

S E R M.
XLII.

SERM. *reviled reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not,* referreth to meek comporting with provocations : the text therefore, as it looketh backward, doth recommend the patience of adversities, as forward, the patience of contumelies. But seeing both these objects are reducible to one more general, comprising both, that is, things seeming evil to us, or offensive to our sense, we may so explicate the duty of patience, as to include them both.

Patience then is that virtue, which qualifieth us to bear all conditions and all events, by God's disposal incident to us, with such apprehensions and persuasions of mind, such dispositions and affections of heart, such external deportments and practices of life, as God requireth and good reason directeth. Its nature will, I conceive, be understood best by considering the chief acts which it produceth, and wherein especially the practice thereof consisteth ; the which briefly are these :

1. A thorough persuasion, that nothing befalleth us by fate, or by chance, or by the mere agency of inferior causes, but that all proceedeth from the dispensation, or with the allowance of God; that *affliction doth not come forth of the dust, nor doth trouble spring out of the ground;* but that all, both

Job v. 6. *good and evil, proceedeth out of the mouth of the Most High,* according as David reflected when

2 Sam. xvi. 10. Shimei reviled him : *Let him, said the good king,*

curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David; and as Job, when he was spoiled of all his

Job i. 21. goods, acknowledged, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.*

2. A firm belief, that all occurrences, however adverse and cross to our desires, are well consistent

with the justice, wisdom, and goodness of God ; so SERM. that we cannot reasonably disapprove, repine at, or XLII. complain of them ; but are bound and ready to avow with the Psalmist, that *all his paths are* Psal. xxv.
mercy and truth ; he is righteous in all his ways, 10. cxlv. 17.
and holy in all his works ; to judge and say with Hezekiah, *Good is the word of the Lord, which* 2 Kings xx.
thou hast spoken ; to confess with David unto him, 19.
I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right ; Psal. cxix.
and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. 75.

3. A full satisfaction of mind, that all (even the most bitter and sad accidents) do (according to God's purpose) tend and conduce to our good ; acknowledging the truth of those divine aphorisms : *Happy is the man whom God correcteth ; whom* Job v. 17.
the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the Prov. iii.
son in whom he delighteth. As many as I love, I Heb. xii. 5.
rebuke and chasten. Rev. iii. 19.

4. An entire submission and resignation of our wills to the will of God, suppressing all rebellious insurrections and grievous resentments of heart against his providence ; which may dispose us heartily to say after our Lord, *Let not my will, but thine be* Luke xxii.
done ; with good Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do* 1 Sam. iii.
what seemeth him good ; with David, *Here I am,* 2 Sam. xv.
let him do to me as seemeth good to him ; yea, 26.
even with Socrates, *If so it pleasest God, so let it be.*

5. Bearing adversities calmly, cheerfully, and courageously, so as not to be discomposed with anger or grief ; not to be put out of humour, not to be dejected or disheartened ; but in our disposition of mind to resemble the primitive saints, who were *as λυπούμενοι, ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, as grieved, but always re-* 2 Cor. vi.
io.

SERM. joicing ; who took joyfully the spoiling of their
 XLII. goods, who accounted it all joy when they fell into
 Heb. x. 34 divers tribulations.
 Jam. i. 2.

6. A hopeful confidence in God for the removal or easement of our afflictions, and for his gracious aid to support them well ; agreeable to those good rules Lam. iii. and precepts : *It is good that a man should both 26. hope, and wait quietly for the salvation of the Psa. xxxvii. Lord ; Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for 7. xxvii. 14. him ; wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart ; according to the pattern of David, who, in such a case, thus roused Psal. xlvi. 5. and stayed himself : Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me ? hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance ; and after the holy apostles, who in their most forlorn estate could say, 2 Cor. iv. 8. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed.*

7. A willingness to continue, during God's pleasure, in our afflicted state, without weariness or irksome longings for alteration ; according to that advice of the Wise Man ; *My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction ;* and that of the apostle, backed with Prov. iii. 11. *our Lord's example, Considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds.*

8. A lowly frame of mind (that is, being sober in our conceits of ourselves, sensible of our unworthiness and meanness, of our natural frailty, penury, and wretchedness ; of our manifold defects and miscarriages in practice ; being meek and gentle, ten-

der and pliable in our temper and frame of spirit; SERM. being deeply affected with reverence and dread toward the awful majesty, mighty power, perfect justice and sanctity of God; all this) wrought by our adversity, effectually, according to its design, quelling our haughty stomach, softening our hard hearts, mitigating our peevish humours; according to St. Peter's injunction, *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God*; and God's own approbation joined with a gracious promise, *To this man will I look; Isa. lxvi. even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit,² and trembleth at my word.*

9. Restraining our tongues from all discontentful complaints and murmurings, all profane, harsh, unsavoury expressions, importing displeasure or dissatisfaction in God's dealings toward us, arguing desperation or distrust in him; such as were those of the impatient and incredulous Israelites: *They spake against God, and said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of whom the prophet said, *When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their king and their God;* such as they were guilty of, whom St. Jude calleth γογγυστὰς, καὶ μεριψούρους, *murmurers, and querulous persons,* (or such as found fault with their lot,) that which is styled, *charging God foolishly;* for abstaining from which, notwithstanding the pressure of his most grievous calamities, Job is commended, (where it is said, *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly;*) that which the prophet condemneth as unreasonable in that ex-

S E R M. postulation, *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* In such cases we should smother our passions in a still and silent demeanour, as the Psalmist advised, and as he practised himself: *I was dumb, saith he, and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doings.* Yea, contrariwise, patience requireth,

10. Blessing and praising God, (that is, declaring our hearty satisfaction in God's proceedings with us, acknowledging his wisdom, justice, and goodness therein, expressing a grateful sense thereof, as wholesome and beneficial to us,) in conformity to Job, who, upon the loss of all his comforts, did thus vent his mind: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

11. Abstaining from all irregular and unworthy courses toward the removal or redress of our crosses; choosing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve or relax ourselves; contentedly wearing, rather than violently breaking our yoke, or bursting our bonds; rather continuing poor, than striving to enrich ourselves by fraud or rapine; rather lying under contempt, than by sinful or sordid compliances attempting to gain the favour and respect of men; rather embracing the meanest condition, than labouring by any turbulent, unjust, or uncharitable practices to amplify our estate; rather enduring any inconvenience or distress, than setting our faces toward Egypt, or having recourse to any succour which God disalloweth; according to what is implied in that representation of St. Paul, Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why

Job i. 21.

Jer. v. 5.

Jer. xliii. 15.

1 Cor. vi. 7.

*do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded ? SER M.
and in that advice of St. Peter, Let them that suffer XLII.
according to the will of God commit the keeping ¹ Pet. iv.
of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faith-^{19.}
ful Creator.*

12. A fair behaviour toward the instruments and abettors of our affliction ; those who brought us into it, or who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, or sparing to yield the succour which we might expect ; the forbearing to express any wrath or displeasure, to exercise any revenge, to retain any grudge or enmity toward them ; but rather even upon that score bearing good-will, and shewing kindness unto them ; unto them, not only as to our brethren, whom, according to the general law of charity, we are bound to love, but as to the servants of God in this particular case, or as to the instruments of his pleasure toward us ; considering that by maligning or mischieving them, we do signify ill resentment of God's dealings with us, and in effect, through their sides, do wound his providence : thus did the pious king demean himself when he was bitterly reproached and cursed by Shimei ; not suffer- ^{2 Sam. xvi.} ing, upon this account, any harm or requital to be ^{7.} offered to him : thus did the holy apostles, who *being reviled, did bless ; being persecuted, did ^{1 Cor. iv.} bear it ; being defamed, did entreat :* thus did our Lord deport himself toward his spiteful adversaries, who *being reviled, did not revile again ; when he ^{1 Pet. ii. 23.} suffered, did not threaten ; but committed it to him ^{iii. 9.} that judgeth righteously.*

13. Particularly in regard to those, who, by injurious and offensive usage, do provoke us, patience importeth,

- SERM. 1. That we be not hastily, over-easily, not immo-
 XLII. derately, not pertinaciously incensed with anger to-
 ward them, according to those divine precepts and
 Jam. i. 19. aphorisms : *Be slow to wrath ; be not hasty in thy*
 Eccles. vii. *spirit to be angry ; for anger resteth in the bosom*
 9. *of fools.* *Give place to wrath,* (that is, remove it.)
 Prov. xvi. 32. xiv. 17. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and cla-*
 29. *mour, and evil speaking, be put away from you,*
 Rom. xii. 19. *Eph. iv. 31,* *with all malice.* *Cease from anger, let go displea-*
 26. *Col. iii. 8.* *Matt. v. 21,* *sure, fret not thyself anywise to do evil.*
 24. Ps. xxxvii. 8. 2. That we do not in our hearts harbour any ill
 will, or ill wishes, or ill designs toward them, but
 that we truly desire their good, and purpose to
 further it, as we shall have ability and occasion, ac-
 cording to that law, (even charged on the Jews.)
 Levit. xix. 18. *Thou shalt not bear any grudge against the chil-*
dren of thy people ; but thou shalt love thy neigh-
bour as thyself ; and according to that noble com-
 Matt. v. 44. mand of our Saviour, *Love your enemies, pray for*
 Luke vi. 27. *them which despitefully use you and persecute*
you.
 3. That in effect we do not execute any revenge,
 or for requital do any mischief to them, either in
 word or deed ; but for their reproaches exchange
 blessings, (or good words and wishes;) for their out-
 rages, repay benefits and good turns ; according to
 Mat. v. 44. those evangelical rules : *Do good to them that hate*
 39. *Rom. xii. 39.* *you, bless them that curse you : Bless them that*
 14. *persecute you, bless and curse not : See that none*
 1 Thess. v. 15. *render evil for evil : Be pitiful, be courteous, not*
 1 Pet. iii. 9. *rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but*
 Prov. xxv. 21. *Rom. xii. 21.* *contrariwise blessing : If thine enemy hunger, feed*
 20. *him ; if he thirst, give him drink : Say not, I will*
 29. *do to him as he hath done to me ; I will render to*

the man according to his work : Say thou not, I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.

Prov. xx.
22.

14. In fine, patience doth include and produce a general meekness and kindness of affection, together with an enlarged sweetness and pleasantness in conversation and carriage toward all men ; implying, that how hard soever our case, how sorry or sad our condition is, we are not therefore angry with the world, because we do not thrive or flourish in it ; that we are not dissatisfied or disgusted with the prosperous estate of other men ; that we are not become sullen or foward toward any man, because his fortune excelleth ours, but that rather we do *rejoice* Rom. xii.
with them that rejoice ; we do find complacence and ^{15.} delight in their good success ; we borrow satisfaction and pleasure from their enjoyments.

In these and the like acts, the practice of this virtue (a virtue which all men, in this state of inward weakness and outward trouble, shall have much need and frequent occasion to exercise) consisteth ; unto which practice, even philosophy, natural reason, and common sense do suggest many inducements ; the tenor of our holy faith and religion do supply more and better ; but nothing can more clearly direct, or more powerfully excite thereto, than that admirable example, by which our text doth enforce it : some principal of those rational inducements we shall cursorily touch, then insist upon this example.

It will generally induce us to bear patiently all things incident, if we consider, that it is the natural right and prerogative of God to dispose of all things, to assign our station here, and allot our portion to us ; whence it is a most wrongful insolence in us,

SERM. by complaining of our state, to contest his right or
XLII. impeach his management thereof: that we are ob-
liged to God's free bounty for numberless great be-
nefits and favours; whence it is vile ingratitude to
be displeased for the want of some lesser conve-
niences: that God having undertaken and promised
to support and succour us, it is a heinous affront to
distrust him, and consequently to be dissatisfied with
our condition: that seeing God doth infinitely better
understand what is good for us than we can do, he
is better affected toward us and more truly loveth
us than we do ourselves, he with an unquestionable
right hath an uncontrollable power to dispose of us;
it is most reasonable to acquiesce in his choice of
our state: that since we have no claim to any good
or any pleasure, and thence in withholding any no
wrong is done to us, it is unjust and frivolous to
murmur or grumble; since we are, by nature, God's
servants, it is fit the appointment of our rank, our
garb, our diet, all our accommodations and employ-
ments in his family, should be left entirely to his
discretion and pleasure: that we being grievous sin-
ners, *less than the least of God's mercies*, meriting
no good, but deserving sore punishment from him,
it is just, that we should be highly content and
thankful for any thing on this side death and
damnation: that our afflictions being the natural
fruits and results of our choice or voluntary miscar-
riages, it is reasonable we should blame ourselves
rather than pick quarrels with Providence for them.
That our condition, be it what it will, cannot, being
duly estimated, be extremely bad or insupportably
grievous; for that as no condition here is perfectly
and purely good, (not deficient in some accommoda-

is, not blended with some troubles,) so there is SERM.
ie that hath not its conveniences and comforts ; XLII.
that it is our fond conceits, our foward humours,
perverse behaviours, which create the mischiefs
herent to any state ; for that also how forlorn
ver our case is, we cannot fail, if we please, of a
acity to enjoy goods far more than countervailing
possible want of these goods, or presence of these
s ; we may have the use of our reason, a good
science, hope in God, assurance of God's love
favour, abundance of spiritual blessings here,
a certain title to eternal glory and bliss here-
r ; which, if we can have, our condition cannot
leemed uncomfortable. That indeed our adver-
is a thing very good and wholesome, very pro-
ple and desirable, as a means of breeding, im-
ring, and exercising the best virtues, of preparing
or and entitling us to the best rewards. That
state cannot ever be desperate ; our adversity
ably may not be lasting, (there being no con-
ion between the present and the future, vicissi-
es being frequent, all things depending on the
trary dispensation of God, who doth always pity
nd is apt to relieve us.) That, however, our
ction will not outlive ourselves, and certainly
t soon expire with our life. That this world is
a place of perfect convenience, or pure delight ;
come not hither to do our will, or enjoy our
sure ; we are not born to make laws, or pick our
lition here ; but that *trouble* is natural and
er to us (*we are born thereto, as the sparks fly* Job v. 7.
ards.) No tribulation seizeth us, but such as ^{1 Cor. x. 13.}
uman ; whence it is reasonable that we con-
edly bear the crosses suitable to our nature and

SERM. state. That no adversity is in kind or degree peculiar to us; but if we survey the conditions of other men, (of our brethren every where, of our neighbours all about us,) and compare our case with theirs, we shall find that we have many consorts and associates in adversity, most as ill, many far worse bestead than ourselves; whence it must be a great fondness and perverseness to be displeased that we are not exempted from, but exposed to bear a share in the common troubles and burdens of mankind. That it hath particularly been the lot of the best men (persons most excellent in virtue and most deep in God's favour) to sustain adversity; and it therefore becometh us willingly and cheerfully to accept it. That, in fine, patience itself is the best remedy to ease us in, to rescue us from adversity; for it cannot much annoy us, if we bear it patiently; God will, in mercy, remove it, if we please him, by demeaning ourselves well under it; but that impatience doth not at all conduce to our relief, doth indeed exasperate and augment our pain: such considerations may induce us to a patience in general respecting all sorts of evil.

There are also reasons particularly disposing to bear injuries and contumelies from men calmly and meekly, without immoderate wrath, rancorous hatred, or spiteful revenge toward them: because they do proceed from Divine Providence, disposing or permitting them (for the trial of our patience, the abasing our pride, the exercising of some other virtues, or for other good purposes) to fall upon us: because vindication of misdemeanours committed against us doth not appertain to us, we not being competent judges of them, nor rightful executors of

the punishments due to them, God having reserved SERM.
to himself the right of decision and power of execu- XLII.
tion; *Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will* Rom.xii.19.
repay it: because we are obliged to interpret cha- Heb. x. 30.
ritably the actions of our neighbour, supposing his Deut.xxxii.
miscalriages to proceed from infirmity, from mis- 35, 36.
take, or from some cause, which we should be rather Vid. Tert.
inclinable to excuse than to prosecute with hatred or de Pat. cap.
revenge: because, indeed, our neighbour's most cul- 10.
pable offences, as issuing from distemper of mind,
are more reasonably the objects of compassion and
charity, than of anger or ill-will: because we are
bound to forgive all injuries by the command of
God, and in conformity to his example, who passeth
by innumerable most heinous offences committed
against himself; *Gracious is the Lord, and full of* Psal. cxlv.
compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy; 8. lxxxvi.
longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth; 15.
so must we be also, if we will be like him or please
him: because we ourselves, being subject to incur
the same faults in kind, or greater in value, do need
such pardon, and should thence be ready to allow
it unto others, both in equity, and in gratitude to
ward God, lest that in the gospel be applied to us;
O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, Matt. xviii.
because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also 32.
have had compassion upon thy fellow-servant, even
as I had pity on thee? Because God hath made it
a necessary condition of our obtaining mercy, pro-
nising us favour if we yield it, menacing us ex-
tremity if we refuse it; *If ye forgive men their* Matt.vi. 14.
trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive Ecclus. viii.
you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, 2.
neither will your Father forgive your trespasses: Matt. xviii.
Mark xi. 35.
25.

SERM. because our neighbour suffering by our revenge in
XLII. any manner, (in his body, interest, or reputation,) doth not anywise profit us, or benefit our estate, but needlessly doth multiply and increase the stock of mischief in the world ; yea, commonly doth bring further evil upon ourselves, provoking him to go on in offending us, rendering him more implacably bent against us, engaging us consequently deeper in strife and trouble: because no wrong, no disgrace, no prejudice we can receive from men is of much consequence to us, if our mind be not disordered ; if we are free from those bad passions, which really are the worst evils that can befall us : because, in fine, impatience itself is insignificant and ineffectual to any good purpose, or rather produceth ill effects ; if doth not cure our wound, or assuage our grief ; it removeth no inconvenience, nor repaireth any damage we have received, but rather inflameth our temper and aggravateth our pain^a; more really indeed molesting and hurting us, than the injury or courtesy which causeth it. Thus, briefly, doth reason dictate to us the practice of all patience.

But the example proposed by the apostle here,
Phil. ii. 5. and otherwhere by St. Paul, (*Let the same mind be
in you, which was also in Christ Jesus—*) by the
Heb. xii. 1. apostle to the Hebrews, (*Let us run with patience
2. the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus
the author and finisher of our faith—*) by our Lord
Matt. xi. 29. himself, (*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly—*)
that doth in a more lively manner express how in

^a Idecirco quis te lædit ut doleas, quia fructus lædantis in dolore læsi est. *Tert. de Pat.* 8.

Si patientiae incubabo, non dolebo ; si non dolebo, ulcisci non desiderabo. *Ib.* 1.

such cases we should deport ourselves, and most SERM. strongly engageth us to comply with duties of this XLII. nature. Let us now therefore describe it, and recommend it to your consideration.

The example of our Lord was indeed in this kind Vid. Tertul. de Pat. c. 3. the most remarkable that ever was presented, the Cypr. de Pat. t. ii. most perfect that can be imagined : he was, above p. 315. all expression, *a man of sorrows and acquainted Is. liii. 3. with grief*; he did undertake, as to perform the best works, so to endure the worst accidents to which human nature is subject ; his whole life being no other than one continual exercise of patience and meekness, in all the parts and to the utmost degrees of them. If we trace the footsteps of his life from the sordid manger to the bloody cross, we shall not be able to observe any matter of complacence, scarce any of comfort (in respect to his natural or worldly state) to have befallen him.

His parentage was mean, to appearance ; and his birth, in all exterior circumstances, despicable : *Is Matt. xiii. 55. not this the carpenter's son ?* were words of con- Mark vi. 3. tempt and offence, upon all occasions thrown upon him.

His life was spent not only in continual labour and restless travel, but in hard poverty ; yea, in extreme penury, beneath the state not only of the meanest men, but of the most shifting beasts : *The Matt. viii. foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have 20. nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

For his necessary sustenance we find him often Matt. xxi. destitute of ordinary provision, (as when he sought Nullius 18, 19. food from the barren fig-tree,) often indebted for it mensam, to the courtesy and, as it were, alms of the vilest tectumve despexit. *Tert.*

SER.M. people, of *publicans and sinners*: so δι' ἡμᾶς ἐπέ-
XLII. χευστε, *he was*, as the apostle saith, *a beggar for us*.

2 Cor. viii. Yet may we never perceive him anywise discontented with, or complaining of his condition; not discouraged or depressed in spirit thereby, not solicitously endeavouring any correction or change thereof; but willingly embracing it, heartily acquiescing therein; and, notwithstanding all its inconveniences, cheerfully discharging his duties, vigorously pursuing his main designs of procuring glory to God and benefit to men.

Nor did he only with content undergo the incommodes of a poor estate, but he was surrounded with continual dangers; the most powerful men of those times, enraged with envy, ambition, and avarice, desperately maligning him, and being incessantly attentive, upon all occasions, to molest, hurt, and destroy him: *The world*, (as he saith himself, that is, all the powerful and formidable part of the world) *hating me*; yet did not this anywise dismay or distemper him, nor cause him either to repine at his condition or decline his duty. He utterly disregarded all their spiteful machinations, persisting immoveable in the prosecution of his pious and charitable undertakings, to the admiration of those who

John vii. observed his demeanour: *Is not this he*, said they, *whom they seek to kill? but lo, he speaketh boldly.*

Luke iv. 30. He did indeed sometimes opportunely shun their Matt. xxi. fury, and prudently did elude their snares, but never 27. xxii. 18. went violently to repel them, or to execute any revenge for them; improving the wonderful power he was endued with altogether to the advantage of mankind, never to the bane or hurt of his malicious enemies.

Sensible enough he was of the causeless hatred SERM.
 they bare him, (*ἐμίσησάν με δωρεὰν*, *They*, said he, XLII.
have hated me for nothing,) and of their extreme ^{John xv.}
ingratitude; yet never could he be provoked to re-
 sent or requite their dealing: see how mildly he
 did expostulate the case with them; *Then*, saith St. John x. 31..
*John, the Jews took up stones to stone him: Jesus
 answered them, Many good things have I shewed
 you from my Father; for which of those do ye
 stone me?*

To be extremely hated and inhumanly persecuted,
 without any fault committed or just occasion offered,
 is greatly incensive of human passion; but for the most inex-
 pressible beneficence, to be recompensed with most
 virulent reproaches, most odious slanders, most out-
 rageous misusages—how exceeding was that meek-
 ness, which, without any signification of regret or
 disgust, could endure it!

Out of most tender charity and ardent desire of ^{Matt. xxiii.}
 their salvation, he instructed them, and instilled ^{37.}
 heavenly doctrine into their minds; what thanks, what
 reward did he receive for that great favour? to be
 reputed and reported an impostor: *πλανῆ τὸν ὄχλον*, John vii.
he, said they, doth impose upon the people. ^{12.} ^{Matt. xxvii.}

He took occasion to impart the great blessing of ^{63.}
 pardon for sin to some of them, confirming his au-
 thority of doing it by a miraculous work of good-
 ness; how did they resent such an obligation? by
 accounting him a blasphemer: *Behold*, saith St. Matt. ix. 3,
&c. Matthew, *certain of the Scribes said within them-
 selves, This man blasphemeth*: which most harsh
 and uncharitable censure of theirs he did not fiercely

SERM. repreнд, but calmly discussed and refuted by a
 XLII. clear reasoning; τί ἐνθυμεῖσθε πονηρόν; *Wherefore con-*

ceive ye evil in your hearts? for whether is easier
to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee? or to say,

Ingratos curavit, in-
 sidiatoribus who can perform the one may dispense the other?
 cessit. *Tert.*

He freed them from most grievous diseases, yea
 rescued them from the greatest mischief possible in

Acts x. 38. nature, being possessed by the unclean fiend; how
 did they entertain this mighty benefit? by most
 horrible calumny, accusing him of sorcery or conspi-

Matt. ix. Matt. x. 34. *xiii. 24.* *He casteth out devils by the prince of the devils:*

yea, thence attributing to him the very name and

Matt. x. 25. title of the grand Devil: *If they have called the*
master of the house Beelzebub, how much more
(shall they defame) them of his household? Yet
 this most injurious defamation he no otherwise re-
 buketh, than by a mild discourse, strongly confuting

Matt. xii. Matt. xii. 25. it; *Every kingdom, said he, divided against itself*
is brought to desolation—and if Satan cast out Sa-
tan, he is divided against himself; how then shall
his kingdom stand? that is, the Devil better under-
 stands his interest, than to assist any man in dis-
 possessing himself.

He did constantly labour in reclaiming them from
 error and sin, in converting them to God and good-
 ness, in proposing fair overtures of grace and mercy

to them, in shewing them by word and practice the
 sure way to happiness: What issue was there of all

his care and pains? What but neglect, distrust, dis-

appointment, rejection of himself, of what he said,

John xii. 38. and what he did? *Who hath believed our report,*

and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? was a prophecy abundantly verified by their carriage toward him.

SERM.
XLII.

These and the like usages, which he perpetually did encounter, he constantly received without any passionate disturbance of mind, any bitter reflections upon that generation, any revengeful enterprises against them; yea, requited them with continued earnestness of hearty desires, and laborious endeavours for their good.

We might observe the ingrateful disrespects of his own countrymen and kindred toward him, which he passeth over without any grievous disdain; rather excusing it, by noting that entertainment to have been no peculiar accident to himself, but usual to all of like employment; *No prophet*, said he, *is acceptable in his own country.*

Luke iv. 24.
Matt. xiii.
57.

We might also mention his patient suffering repulses from strangers; as when being refused admittance into a Samaritan village, and his disciples, being incensed with that rude courtesy, would have fire called down from heaven to consume those churls^a, he restrained their unadvised wrath, and thus expressed his admirable meekness: *The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*

We might likewise remark his meek comporting with the stupid and perverse incredulity of his disciples, notwithstanding so many pregnant and palpable inducements continually exhibited for confirmation of their faith, the which he no otherwise

Luke ix. 41.
Matt. xvii.
17.
Non peccatores, non
publicanos
aspernatus
est. Tert.

^a Non illi saltem civitati quæ cum recipere noluerat iratus est, cum etiam discipuli tam contumelioso oppido cœlestes ignes representari voluissent. Tert.

SERM. than sometime gently admonisheth them of, saying,

XLII. τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλγόπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye*

Matt. viii. *of little faith?* ὀλγόπιστε, τί ἔδιστασ; *O thou of*
26. xiv. 31. *small faith, why didst thou doubt?*

What should I insist on these, although very remarkable instances? since that one scene of his most grievous (shall I say, or glorious) passion doth represent unto us a perfect and most lively image of the highest patience and meekness possible; of the greatest sorrow that ever was or could be, yet of a patience surmounting it; of the extremest malice that ever was conceived, yet of a charity overswaying it; of injury most intolerable, yet of a meekness willingly and sweetly bearing it: there may we observe the greatest provocation from all hands to passionate animosity of spirit and intemperate heat of speech, yet no discovery of the least disorderly, angry, or revengeful thought, the least rash, bitter, or reproachful word; but all undergone with clearest serenity of mind, and sweetness of carriage toward all persons.

To Judas, who betrayed him, how doth he address himself? Doth he use such terms as the man deserved, or as passion would have suggested, and reason would not have disallowed? Did he say, Thou most perfidious villain, thou monster of iniquity and ingratitude! thou desperately wicked wretch! dost thou, prompted by thy base covetousness, treacherously attempt to ruin thy gracious Master and best Friend; thy most benign and bountiful Saviour? No; instead of such proper language, he useth the most courteous and endearing terms:

Matt. xxvi. Ἐταῖρε, ἐφ' ὃ πάρει; *Friend, (or companion,) for what*
50. *dost thou come? or what is thy business here? A*

tacit charitable warning there is to reflect upon his SERM. unworthy and wicked action, but nothing apparent XLII. of wrath or reproach.

From his own disciples and servants, who had beheld his many miraculous works, and were indebted to him for the greatest favours, he reasonably might have expected a most faithful adherence and most diligent attendance on him in that juncture : yet he found them careless and slothful : What then ? How did he take it ? Was he angry, did he upbraid, did he storm at them ? did he threaten to discard them ? No ; he only first gently admonisheth them : *What, Matt. xxvi. could ye not watch one hour with me ?* then a little ^{40, 45.} exciteth them, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation :* he withal suggesteth an excuse for their drowsiness and dulness ; *The spirit is willing, Matt. xxvi. but the flesh is weak :* in fine, he indulgeth to their ^{31.} weakness, letting them alone, and saying, καθεύδετε λοιπὸν, *Sleep on now, and take your rest.*

When he foresaw they would be offended at his (to appearance) disastrous estate, and fearfully would desert him, he yet expressed no indignation against them, or decrease of affection toward them upon that score ; but simply mentioneth it, as unconcerned in it, and not affected thereby.

And the unworthy apostasy of that disciple, whom he had especially favoured and dignified, he only did mildly forewarn him of, requiting it foreseen by the promise of his own effectual prayers for his support and recovery ; and when St. Peter had committed that heinous fact, our good Lord only *looked on him Luke xxii. 61, 62.* with an eye of charity and compassion, which more ^{Εἰδὼν.} efficaciously struck him, than the most dreadful ^{τῷ Πίτερῳ.}

SERM. threat or sharp reprehension could have done: Peter
XLII. thereupon *went out, and wept bitterly.*

When the high priest's officer, upon no reasonable occasion, did injuriously and ignominiously strike John xviii. him, he returned only this mild expostulation: *If I*
^{23.} *Cypr. Ep.* *have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; if well,*
^{65.} *why smitest thou me?* that is, I advise thee to proceed in a fair and legal way against me, not to deal thus boisterously and wrongfully, to thy own harm.

Even careful and tender he was of those who were the instruments of his suffering; he protected them from harm who conducted him to execution; as we see in the case of the high priest's servant, Luke xxii. whom (with more zeal than wherewith he ever regarded his own safety) he defended from the fury of his own friend, and cured of the wounds received in the way of persecuting himself.

All his demeanour under that great trial was perfectly calm, not the least regret or reluctance of mind, the least contradiction or obloquy of speech appearing therein; such it was as became *the Lamb of God*, who was to *take away the sins of the world*, by a willing oblation of himself; such as did exactly Isa. liii. 7. correspond to the ancient prophecies: *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth;* and, *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*

Neither did the wrongful slanders devised and alleged against him by suborned witnesses, nor the

virulent invectives of the priests, nor the barbarous clamours of the people, nor the contemptuous spitting upon him and buffeting him, nor the cruel scourgings, nor the contumelious mockeries, nor all the bloody tortures inflicted upon him, wring from him one syllable importing any dissatisfaction in his case, any wrath conceived for his misusages, any grudge or ill-will in his mind toward his persecutors; but, on the contrary, instead of hatred and revenge, he declared the greatest kindness and charity toward them, praying heartily to God his Father for the pardon of their sins. Instead of aggravating their crime and injury against him, he did in a sort extenuate and excuse it by consideration of their ignorance and mistake: *Lord*, said he, in the height Luke xxiii. of his sufferings, *forgive them, for they know not*³⁴ *what they do.* The life they so violently bereaved him of, he did willingly mean to lay down for the ransom of their lives; the blood they spilt, he wished to be a salutary balsam for their wounds and maladies; he most cheerfully did offer himself by their hands a sacrifice for their offences. No small part of his afflictions was a sense of their so grievously displeasing God, and pulling mischief on their own heads, a foresight of his kind intentions being frustrated by their obstinate incredulity and impenitence, a reflection upon that inevitable vengeance, which from the Divine justice would attend them; this foreseen did work in him a distasteful sense, (more grievous than what his own pain could produce,) and drew from him tears of compassion, (such as no resentment of his own case could extort;) for, *When* Luke xix. *he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over* ^{41. xiii. 34.} *it, saying, O that thou hadst known, even thou, at*

SERM. least in this thy day, the things which belong unto
XLII. thy peace.

If ever he did express any commotion of mind in reference to this matter, it was only then when one of his friends, out of a blind fondness of affection, did presume to dissuade him from undergoing these evils ; then indeed, being somewhat moved with indignation, he said to St. Peter, *Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto me : for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.*

Matt. xvi. 23.

Neither was it out of a stupid insensibility or stubborn resolution, that he did thus behave himself; for he had a most vigorous sense of all those grievances, and a strong (natural) aversion from undergoing them ; as those dolorous agonies whereby he struggled, those deadly groans he uttered, those monstrous lumps of blood he sweat out, those earnest prayers he made to be freed from them, declare ; but from a perfect submission to the Divine will, and entire command over his passions, an excessive charity toward mankind, this patient and

John xviii. 11.

Matt. xxvi. 39.

Luke xxii. 42.

meek behaviour did spring : *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ? O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt ; let not my will, but thine be done. No man taketh away my life, but I lay it down of my own accord : I will give my flesh for the life of the world.* So doth our Lord himself express the true grounds of his passion and his patience.

Such is the example of our Lord : the serious consideration whereof how can it otherwise than work patience and meekness in us ? If he, that was

the Lord of glory, (infinitely excellent in dignity SERM.
and virtue,) did so readily embrace, did so con- XLII.
tentedly endure such extremities of penury, hard-
ship, disgrace, and pain, how can we refuse them, or
repine at them? Can we pretend to a better lot
than he received, or presume that God must deal
better with us than he did with his own dearest
Son? Can we be displeased at a conformity to our
Lord and Master? Can we, without shame, affect
to live more splendidly, or to fare more deliciously
than he chose to do? Shall we fret or wail, because
our desires are crossed, our projects defeated, our in-
terests anywise prejudiced; whenas his most earnest
desires and his most painful endeavours had so little
of due and desired success; when he was ever ready,
and had so constant occasion to say, *Let not my will
be done?* Can we despise that state of meanness
and sorrow which he, from the highest sublimities of
glory and beatitude, was pleased to stoop unto?
Can we take ourselves for the want of any present
conveniences or comforts to be wretched, whenas
the fountain of all happiness was destitute of all
such things, and scarce did ever taste any worldly
pleasure? Are we fit or *worthy to be his disciples*, Luke xiv.
if we will not *take up his cross and follow him*; if ^{27. ix. 23.} Matt. x. 38.
we will not go to his school, (that school wherein he ^{xvi. 24.}
is said himself to have *learnt obedience*;) if we will Heb. v. 8.
not con that lesson which he so loudly hath read out,
and transcribe that copy which he so fairly hath set
before us? Can we pretend to those great benefits,
those high privileges, those rich and excellent re-
wards, which he hath attained for us, and which he Heb. ii. 9,
proposest to us, if we will not go on toward them ^{10.} Phil. ii. 9.

SERM. in that way of patience which he hath trod before
 XLII. us?

Heb. xii. 3. Can we also, if we consider him that endureth such contradiction of sinners, be transported with any wrathful or revengeful passion, upon any pro-

*Quam gra-
vis causa sit
hominis for better usage from men than our Lord did ever
Christiani
servum pati find? Can we be much displeased with any man for
nolle, cum
prior passus thwarting our desires or interests, for dissenting
sit Domi- from our conceits, for crossing our humours, whenas
nus, &c.
Cypr. Ep. he, to whom all respect and observance was due,
56.*

did meet with so little regard or compliance in any way; continually did encounter repulses, disappointments, oppositions from the perverse and spiteful world? Can we be very jealous of our credit, or furious when our imaginary honour (honour that we never really deserved or can justly claim, being guilty of so many great faults and sins) is touched with the least disgraceful reflection, if we do well observe and mind, that the most truly, and indeed only honourable personage (only honourable, because only innocent person) that ever was, had his reputation aspersed by the most odious reproaches which deepest envy and malice could devise, without any grievous resentment, or being solicitous otherwise to assert or clear it than by a constant silence? Can we be exasperated by every petty affront, (real or supposed,) when the most noble, most courteous, most obliging person that ever breathed upon earth was treacherously exposed to violence by his own servant, shamefully deserted by his own most beloved friends, despitefully treated by those whom he never had offended, by those upon whom he had

heaped the greatest benefits, without expressing any SERM.
anger or displeasure against them, but yielding XLII.
many signal testimonies of tenderest pity and love
toward them? Can we see our Lord treated like a
slave and a thief, without any disturbance or com-
motion of heart; and we vile wretches, upon every
slight occasion, swell with fierce disdain, pour forth
reproachful language, execute horrible mischief upon
our brethren? He indeed was surrounded with in-
juries and affronts; every sin, that since the founda-
tion of things hath been committed, was an offence
against him and a burden upon him; (*God laid* Isa. liii. 6.
upon him the iniquities of us all;) so many de-
clared enemies, so many rebels, so many persecutors,
so many murderers he had as there have lived men
in the world; for every sinner did in truth conspire
to his affliction and destruction; we all in effect did
betray him, did accuse him, did mock, did scourge,
did pierce, and crucify him; yet he forgave all
offences, he died for all persons; *while we were yet* Rom. v. 6,
enemies, yet sinners, he died for us, to rescue us
from death and misery: and shall we not then, in
imitation of him, for his dear sake, in gratitude, re-
spect, and obedience to him, be ready to bear the Rependa-
mus illi pa-
infirmities of our brethren, to forgive any small tientiam,
wrongs or offences from them; whatever they do to quam pro
us, to love them, and do them what good we can? nobis ipse
If so admirable a pattern of patience and meekness *Pat. 16.*
so immense cannot, what is there that can oblige or
move us? I conclude with those doxologies to our
so patient and meek Redeemer:

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Apoc. v.
power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and ^{12, 13.}
honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and

SERM. honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that
XLII. sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever
and ever.

Apoc. i. 5,
6. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our
sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and
priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory
and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

S E R M O N XLIII.

REJOICE EVERMORE.

1 THESS. v. 16.

Rejoice evermore.

REJOICE evermore! O good apostle, how acceptable rules dost thou prescribe! O blessed God, how gracious laws dost thou impose! This is a rule, to which one would think all men should be forward to conform; this is a law, which it may seem strange that any man should find in his heart to disobey: for what can any soul desire more than to be always on the merry pin, or to lead a life in continual alacrity? Who readily would not embrace a duty, the observance whereof is not only pleasant, but pleasure itself? Who is so wild as to affect a sin, which hath nothing in it but disease and disgust?

That joy should be enjoined, that sadness should be prohibited, may it not be a plausible exception against such a precept, that it is superfluous and needless, seeing all the endeavours of men do aim at nothing else but to procure joy and eschew sorrow; seeing all men do conspire in opinion with Solomon, that *a man hath nothing better under the sun than* Eccl. viii. *—to be merry.* Were it not rather expedient to re-^{15. ii. 24.}commend sober sadness, or to repress the inclinations ^{iii. 12, 22.}_{v. 18, 26.} of men to effuse mirth and jollity?

SERM. So it may seem ; but yet, alas ! if we consult experience, or observe the world, we shall find this precept very ill obeyed : for do we not commonly see people in heavy dumps ? do we not often hear doleful complaints ? is not this world apparently a stage of continual trouble and grief ? Did not the Eccles. i. 14. Preacher, upon a diligent survey of *all the works done under the sun*, truly proclaim, *Behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit ?* Where, I pray, is any full or firm content ? where is solid and durable joy to be found ?

It is true that men, after a confused manner, are very eager in the quest, and earnest in the pursuit of joy ; they rove through all the forest of creatures, and beat every bush of nature for it, hoping to catch it either in natural endowments and improvements of soul, or in the gifts of fortune, or in the acquests of industry ; in temporal possessions, in sensual enjoyments, in ludicrous diversions and amusements of fancy ; in gratification of their appetites and passions ; they all hunt for it, though following a different scent, and running in various tracks ; some in way of plodding for rare notions ; some in compassing ambitious projects ; some in amassing heaps of wealth ; some in practice of over-reaching subtleties ; some in wrecking their malice, their revenge, their envy ; some in venting frothy conceits, bitter scoffs, or profane railleries ; some in jovial conversation and quaffing the full bowls ; some in music and dancing ; some in gallantry and courting ; some in all kinds of riotous excess and wanton dissoluteness ; so each in his way doth incessantly prog for joy ; but all much in vain, or without any considerable success ; finding at most, instead of it,

some faint shadows, or transitory flashes of pleasure, S E R M. the which, depending on causes very contingent and XLIII.
 mutable, residing in a frail temper of fluid humours
 of body, consisting in slight touches upon the organs
 of sense, in frisks of the corporeal spirits, or in fumes
 and vapours twitching the imagination, do soon flag
 and expire; their short enjoyment being also tem-
 pered with regret, being easily dashed by any cross
 accident, soon declining into a nauseous satiety, and
 in the end degenerating into gall and bitter remorse;
 for, *Even*, as Solomon observed, *in laughter the Prov. xiv.
 heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is*¹³ *heaviness*: and, *Though*, as it is said in Job, (ch. Sunt quæ-
 xx. ver. 12, 14, 20.) *wickedness is sweet in the
 mouth—yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is*<sup>dam tristes
 voluptates.</sup> *Sen. Ep. 67.
 Quaque-
 versum se
 verterit
 anima bo-
 minis, ad
 dolores fi-
 gitur alibi,
 prater-
 quam in te.*
*Aug. Cons.
 iv. 10.*

Wherefore there is ground more than enough, that we should be put to seek for a true, substantial, and consistent joy; it being withal implied, that we should effect it in another way, or look for it in another box, than commonly men do; who therefore are so generally disappointed, because they would have it upon impossible or undue terms, and least expect it there, where it is only to be had.

It is a scandalous misprision, vulgarly admitted, concerning religion, that it is altogether sullen and sour, requiring a dull, lumpish, morose kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all good humour; whereas, on the contrary, it alone is the never-failing

SERM. source of true, pure, steady joy ; such as is deeply
XLIIL rooted in the heart, immoveably founded in the rea-
son of things, permanent like the immortal spirit
wherein it dwelleth, and like the eternal objects
whereon it is fixed, which is not apt to fade or cloy ;
and is not subject to any impressions apt to corrupt
or impair it : whereas, in our text, and in many
texts parallel to it, we see, that our religion doth not
only allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful,
as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be
sad for one minute, banishing the least fit of melan-
choly, charging us in all times, upon all occasions, to
be cheerful ; supposing, consequently, that it is in
some manner possible to be so, and affording power
to effect what it doth require.

Such indeed is the transcendent goodness of our
God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and
our sorrow to be our sin, adapting his holy will to
our principal instinct ; that he would have us to re-
semble himself, as in all other perfections, so in a
constant state of happiness ; that as he hath pro-
vided a glorious heaven of bliss for us hereafter, so
he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradise of
delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the
whole frame of our religion in a tendency to produce
joy in those who embrace it ; for what is the gospel,
but, as the holy angel, the first promulger of it, did

Luke ii. 10. report, *good tidings of great joy to all people ?*

Rom. xv.
33. 13. 5.
Eph. ii. 4.
2 Cor. i. 3.
xiii. 11.
1 Pet. v. 10.
Jam. v. 11.

How doth God represent himself therein, but as *the God of love, of hope, of peace, of all consolation,*
cheerfully smiling in favour on us, graciously in-
viting us to the most pleasant enjoyments, bounti-
fully dispensing most comfortable blessings of mercy,
of grace, of salvation to us ? for what doth our Lord

call us to him; but that he may give us rest and refreshment to our souls; that he may wipe away all tears from our eyes; that he may save us from most woful despair, and settle us in a blessed hope; that we may enter into our Master's joy; that our joy may be full, and such as no man can take from us?

SERM.
XLIII.Matt. xi.
28.Apoc. vii.
17. xxi. 4.Tit. ii. 13.
Matt. xxv.
21.John xv. 11.
xvi. 22, 24.
John xiv.
16.

What is the great overture of the gospel, but the gift of a most blessed *Comforter, to abide with us for ever*, cheering our hearts with his lightsome presence and ravishing consolations? Wherein doth the kingdom of heaven consist? *not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* What are the prime fruits sprouting from that root of Christian life, the Divine Spirit? they are, as St. Paul telleth us, *love, joy, and peace.* Are there not numberless declarations importing a joyful satisfaction granted to the observers of God's commandments; that *light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart?* Doth not our Lord pronounce a special beatitude to the practiser of every virtue? And if we scan all the doctrines, all the institutions, all the precepts, all the promises of Christianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of joy, will not each yield great reason and strong obligation to this duty of *rejoicing evermore?*

Wherefore a Christian, as such, (according to the design of his religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates,) is the most jocund, blithe, and gay person in the world; always in humour and full of cheer; continually bearing a mind well satisfied, a light heart and calm spirit, a smooth brow and serene countenance, a grateful accent of speech, and a sweetly composed tenor of carriage; no black

SER M. thought, no irksome desire, no troublesome passion
XLIII. should lodge in his breast ; any furrow, any frown, any cloud doth sit ill upon his face; the least fretful word or foward behaviour doth utterly misbecome him ; if at any time it appear otherwise, it is a deflection from his character ; it is a blemish and wrong to his profession ; it argueth a prevarication in his judgment or in his practice ; he forgetteth that he is a Christian, or hath not preserved the innocence belonging to that name. For, if a Christian remembereth what he is, or is sensible of his condition ; if he reflecteth on the dignity of his person, the nobleness of his relations, the sublimity of his privileges, the greatness and certainty of his hopes, how can he be out of humour ? Is it not absurd for him that is at peace with Heaven, with his own conscience, with all the world ; for the possessor of the best goods, and the heir of a blessed immortality ; for the friend, the favourite, the son of God, to fret or wail ?

He that is settled in a most prosperous state, that is (if he pleaseth) secure of its continuance, that is well assured of its improvement ; that hath whatever good he can wish in his reach, and more than he can conceive in sure reversion ; what account can be given that he should be sad, or seem afflicted ?

Psal. xvi.
ii. He that hath the inexhaustible spring of good for his portion ; that hath his welfare intrusted in God's most faithful hand ; that hath God's infallible word for his support ; that hath free access to him, *in whose presence is fulness of joy* ; that hath frequent tastes of God's goodness, in gracious dispensations of providence, in intercourses of devotion, in the influences of grace ; that hath the infinite beauty and

excellency for the perpetual object of his contemplation and affection ; that enjoyeth the serenity of a sound mind, of a pure heart, of a quiet conscience, of a sure hope, what can he want to refresh or comfort him ?

SERM.
XLIII.

If a true and perfect Christian hath no care to distract him, having discharged all his concerns on God's providence ; if he hath no fear to dismay him, being guarded by the Almighty protection from all danger and mischief ; if he hath no despair to sink him, having a sure refuge in the divine mercy and help ; if he hath no superstitious terrors or scruples to perplex him, being conscious of his own upright intentions to please God, and confident of God's merciful willingness to accept his sincere endeavours ; if he hath no incurable remorse to torment him, the stings of guilt being pulled out by the merits of his Saviour, applied by his faith and repentance ; if he hath no longing desires to disquiet him, being fully satisfied with that he doth possess, or may expect from God's bounty, all other things being far beneath his ambition or coveting ; if he hath no contentions to inflame him, knowing nought here worth passionately striving for, and being resolved to hold a friendly good-will toward all men ; if he hath no repining envy, seeing that none can be more happy than he may be, and that every man's good by charity is made his own ; if he hath no fretful discontent, since he gladly doth acquiesce in the condition and success allotted to him, resigning his will to God's pleasure, taking all for best which thence doth occur, being assured that *all things shall work together for his good* and advantage ; if he hath no spiteful rancours to corrode his heart, no boisterous

SERM. passions to ruffle his mind, no inordinate appetites,
XLIII. perverse humours, or corrupt designs to distemper
 his soul and disturb his life, whence then may sorrow
 come, or how can sadness creep into him*?

What is there belonging to a Christian, whence
 Psal. xlivi. 4. grief naturally can spring? From God, *our exceeding joy*, the fountain of happiness; from heaven, the region of light and bliss; from divine truth, which illustrateth and cheereth the soul; from God's
 Ps. xix. 10. law, which *rejoiceth the heart, and is sweeter than*
 cxxix. 103. *honey and the honeycomb*; from wisdom, whose
 Prov. iii. 17. *ways are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace*; from virtue, which cureth our afflictive distempers, and composeth our vexatious passions; from these things, I say, about which a Christian as such is only conversant, no sorrow can be derived; from those sweet sources no bitter streams can flow: but hell, the flesh, the world, darkness, error, folly, sin, and irreligion, (things with which a Christian should have nothing to do, from which he should keep aloof, which he doth pretend utterly to renounce and abandon,) these, these alone, are the parents of discomfort and anguish.

Wherefore there is the same reason, the same obligation, the same possibility, that we should rejoice evermore, as that we should always be Christians, exactly performing duty, and totally forbearing sin; for innocence and indolency do ever go together, both together making paradise; perfect virtue and constant alacrity are inseparable companions, both constituting beatitude: and as although from our infirmity we cannot attain the highest pitch of virtue,

* Ἐπιθυμίας ἀπελαθείσης εἴδος ή ψυχή, καὶ γαληνόστα γίνεται. Just.
 Mart. ad Græc. Paræn. 2.

yet we must aspire thereto, endeavouring to perfect SERM.
holiness in the fear of God; so, though it may not XLIII.
be possible to get, yet it is reasonable to seek ^{2 Cor. vii. 1.}perpe-
tual joy; which doing in the right way, we shall not ^{Matt. v. 48.}
fail of procuring a good measure of it. ^{1 John iii. 3.}

Indeed to exercise piety and to rejoice are the same things, or things so interwoven, that nothing can disjoin them; religious practice is like that ^{Psal. xlvi. 4.}*river,* *the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High,* that is, every pious soul. No good deed can be performed without satisfaction; each virtue hath a peculiar delight annexed to it: whence the acts of joy, which upon various objects, grounds, and occasions, we may exert, being numberless, I shall only touch a few principal instances.

1. We should evermore rejoice in the exercise of our faith; according to that prayer of our apostle for the Romans, *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.* ^{Rom. xv. 13.}

Every kind of faith (that which embraceth divine truths, that which applieth God's mercy, that which ensureth God's promises, that which confideth in God's providence, each of them) is a clear spring of joy, ever standing open to us; which he that drinketh *shall never thirst.*

<sup>John vi. 35.
vii. 38. iv.</sup>

1. The faith which embraceth God's heavenly truth doth not only enlighten our minds, but is apt to affect our hearts; there being no article of faith, or mystery of our religion, which doth not involve some great advantage, some notable favour, some happy occurrence dispensed to us by the goodness of God, the which faith doth apprehend and convey to our spiritual gust, so that we cannot hardly *but re-* <sup>Matt. xiii.
20.</sup>

^{Phil. i. 25.}

SERM. *ceive the word with joy.* For is it not very sweet
 XLIII. with faith to contemplate the rich bounty of God in
 the creation of the world, and producing so goodly
 a frame, so copious a store of things, with a special
 regard to our sustenance and accommodation? Is it
 not satisfactory to believe that God, by his almighty
 hand and vigilant care, with the same benign regard,
 doth uphold and govern the same? Is it not ex-
 tremely pleasant with faith to reflect on that great
 honour and happiness, which God did vouchsafe to
 confer on mankind, by sending down from heaven
 his only Son to assume our nature, and to converse
^{2 Pet. i. 4.} with men, that we might be advanced to a *partici-
 pation of the divine nature*, and to an enjoyment of
^{1 John i. 3.} *communion with God?* How without great delight
 can we be persuaded that our Saviour, by his meri-
 torious obedience and passion, hath appeased God's
 wrath, and inclined his favour toward us, hath satis-
 fied justice, hath expiated our offences, hath ransomed
 and rescued our souls from the dominion of
 sin and Satan, from death and corruption, from hell
 and everlasting torment, hath purchased immortal
 life and endless bliss for us? What comfort is there
 in being assured, by the resurrection and triumph
 of our Lord over death, that our souls are indeed
 immortal, that our bodies shall be raised from
 the dust, that our persons are capable of an eternal
 subsistence in happiness? Will it not much please
 us with an eye of faith to behold our Redeemer sit-
 ting in glorious exaltation at God's right hand, go-
 verning the world for the benefit of his church, dis-
 pensing benediction and grace to us; interceding, as
^{Heb. ii. 17.} our *merciful and faithful High Priest*, for the
^{1 John ii. 1.} pardon of our sins, the acceptance of our prayers,

adversus—
 2 Cor. iv.
 14.

the supply of our needs, and the relief of our dis- SERM.
tresses? If we be fully convinced that our Lord XLIII.
Jesus is the Christ, our Lord and Saviour, *the author* Heb. v. 9.
of eternal salvation to all that obey him, how can
we otherwise than follow those, of whom St. Peter
saith, *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, 1 Pet. i. 8.*
though ye now see him not, yet believing ye rejoice
with joy unspeakable and full of glory? So from
the hearty belief of every evangelical truth we may
suck consolation; each of them is food of our soul;
and to believe it is to eat it: which how can we do ^{Crede et}
without a delicious or most savoury relish? ^{mandu-}
^{casti. Aug.}

2. At least methinks that faith greatly should exhilarate us, which applieth those verities, (so *wor-* ^{1 Tim. i. 15.}
thy of all acceptance,) wherein God doth open his arms wide to embrace us, proposing most kind invitations and favourable overtures of mercy, upon the fairest terms possible; together with effectual remedies for all the maladies and miseries of our souls: for if we are sensible of our heinous guilts, if we are laden with the heavy burden of our sins, if our heart is galled with sore compunction for our misdeeds, if we are struck with the *terrors of the Lord,* and ^{Ps. xxxviii.}
tremble with the fear of God's judgments; how ^{1. vi. 1. cil.}
comfortable must it be to be persuaded that God is ^{4 cxxiiii. 4.}
fully reconcileable to us, is very desirous to shew us ^{cxxix. 120.}
mercy, and gladly will accept our repentance; that *we have an advocate with the Father,* who *hath* ^{1 John ii. 1,}
propitiated for our sins, doth mediate for our peace, ^{2.}
hath both full power and certain will, if we sincerely do renounce our offences, wholly to remit them! so that *there is therefore now no condemnation to them* ^{Rom. viii. 1.}
which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the
flesh, but after the spirit; and that *being justified* ^{Rom. v. 1.}

SERM. *by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Will not this belief revive us,
XLIII. Psal. li. 8. and make the broken bones to rejoice? will not the gospel of peace be hence in truth *a joyful sound* to us? might it not hence well be proclaimed in the xc. 8, 14. Isa. xl. 1, 2. prophet, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned?*

And if we find ourselves in habit of soul grievously distempered, labouring under great impotency and blindness, overborne and oppressed with the prevalency of corruption, pestered with unreasonable desires and passions, unable to curb our inclinations and appetites, to resist temptations, to discharge our duty in any tolerable measure, or with any ease; is it not then comfortable to believe, that we have a most faithful and skilful physician at hand to cure our distempers; that we have a powerful succour within ken to relieve our infirmities; that God is ready to impart an abundant supply of grace, of light, of spiritual strength to direct and assist us?

that if any man doth lack *wisdom*, he is encouraged Jam. i. 5, 6. *with faith to ask it of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not?* If any man want strength,

Luk. xi. 13. God's Almighty Spirit is promised to those who with humble earnestness do implore it; so that we may

Phil. iv. 13. *be able to do all things* (incumbent on us) *by Christ* Rom. vii. 25. *who strengtheneth us.*

Phil. ii. 13. 3. And what more hearty satisfaction can we feel, than in a firm persuasion concerning the real

² Pet. i. 4. accomplishment of those *exceedingly great and precious promises*, whereby we become capable of the most excellent privileges, the most ample bene-

fits, the most happy rewards that can be? How can SERM.
the belief, that, by God's infallible word, or as surely XLIII.
as truth itself is true, an eternal inheritance of a
treasure that cannot fail, of a glory that cannot fade,
of a kingdom that cannot be shaken, of a felicity
surpassing all expression and all conceit, is reserved
for us, in recompense of our faithful obedience; how,
I say, can that be a dead, dull, dry belief, void of
sprightly comfort and pleasure?

Likewise the faith of confidence in God's good
providence and paternal care over us, (whatever our
condition or circumstances be,) should infuse a
cheerful refreshment of heart into us.

It is in holy scripture most frequently asserted,
that he who placeth his trust in God is a very
blessed and happy person; and can we, without
great satisfaction, partake of that beatitude?

Can we, by such a trust, disburden all our solicitous
cares, all our anxious fears, all the troubles of
our spirit, and pressures of our condition upon God,
with strong assurance, that from his mighty power
and watchful care, in due time, in the most expedient
manner, we shall receive a competent supply
of our wants, a riddance from our grievances, a protection
from all danger and harm, a blessing upon
all our good endeavours and undertakings, without
feeling much ease and peace in our hearts?

What can be more cheering than a persuasion
that all our concerns are lodged in the hands of such
a Friend, so wise, so able, so faithful, so affectionate,
so ever readily disposed to help us and further our
good? They who trust in God are said to abide ^{Psal. xci. 1.}
under the shadow of the Almighty, and to be co-^{Psal. lxi. 4.}
vered with his wings; God is often styled their ^{xcii. 4. lvii.}
^{1. xvii. 8.} ^{xxxvi. 7.}

SERM. rock, their fortress, their shield and buckler, their XLIII. defence and refuge ; and are they not then impreg-
Ps. xviii. 2. nably safe ? why then should they fear any disaster?
lxii. 2.

at what occurrence should they be disturbed? Have
Ps. cxii. 2. they not huge reason to say with the Psalmist, *In*
Ps. lxiii. 7. *the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice; The Lord*
(Ps. xxviii. 7.
(Ps. xxxiii. 21.) *is my strength and my shield, my heart trusteth in*
him, and I am helped; therefore my heart danceth
for joy, and in my song will I praise him. May
not each of those confiders in God well repress all
insurrections of trouble and grief with that holy
Ps. xlvi. 14. charm, *Why art thou so vexed, O my soul, and*
xliii. 5. *why art thou so disquieted within me ? O trust in*
God—for he is the health of my countenance,
and my God.

II. We should evermore rejoice in the practice of
Christian hope, making good that aphorism of Solo-
Prov. x. 28. mon, *The hope of the righteous shall be gladness;*
Rom. xii. 12. and obeying those apostolical injunctions, that we
Heb. iii. 6. should *rejoice in hope;* that we should *retain the*
confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm to the
end. Those excellent and most beneficial truths,
those sweet proposals of grace and mercy, those rich
promises, which faith doth apprehend as true in a
general reference to all Christians, hope doth appropriate
and apply as particularly touching ourselves;
improving the knowledge of our common capacity
into a sense of our special interest in them. God,
saith our faith, will assuredly receive all penitent
sinners to mercy, will crown all pious Christians
with glory, will faithfully perform whatever he hath
graciously promised to all people, hath a tender care
for all that love and fear him ; but God, saith our
2 Tim. iv. 8. hope, will have mercy on me, will *render to me the*

wages of righteousness, will verify his good word SERM. to me his servant, will protect, will deliver, will XLIII. bless me in all exigencies : if so, being conscious of Kings viii. our sincere endeavour to serve and please God ; if²⁶ discerning, from a careful reflection upon our heart and ways, that in some good measure with fidelity and diligence we have discharged the conditions required of us, we can entitle ourselves to God's special affection, we can accommodate his word to our case, we can assume a propriety in his regard, how can we forbear conceiving joy ?

All hope, in proportion to the worth of its object, and the solidity of its ground, is comfortable ; it being the anchor of the soul, which stayeth and Heb. vi. 19. supporteth it in undisturbed rest ; it appeasing unquiet desires ; it setting absent goods before us, and anticipating future enjoyments by a sweet foretaste^a: seeing then, if we have a good conscience, and our heart doth not condemn us, our hope is 1 John iii. grounded on the Rock of ages, (on the immutable Isa. xxvi. 4. nature and the infallible word of God;) seeing it is the hope of the most worthy, the most sublime, the most incomparable and inestimable goods, it must be most extremely delightful.

If it much pleaseth men to conceit themselves next heirs of a fair estate, to have the reversion of a good office, to be probable expectants of a great ferment, (although death may intercept, or other accidents may obstruct the accomplishment of such hopes,) how much more shall that lively hope, of Pet. i. 4. which St. Peter speaketh, of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away,

^a Καὶ πρὸ τοῦ παραστῆναι ἵεσθεσιν τῆς παλιγγένεσίας αὐτὴ ἡ ψυχὴ τῆς ἐπιδιόγενεσίος εὐφραίνεται. Const. Ap. vii. 33.

SERM. reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the
XLIII. power of God through faith unto salvation, (which
hope therefore can never be dashed or defeated,) breed a most cheerful satisfaction, far transcending all other pleasures, which spring from the most desirable fruitions here; according to that admonition Luke 1. 20. of our Lord, *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*

III. We should evermore rejoice in the performing the duty of charity; both that which we owe to God, and that which is due to our neighbour.

Love is the sweetest and most delectable of all passions; and when, by the conduct of wisdom, it is directed in a rational way toward a worthy, congruous, attainable object, it cannot otherwise than fill the heart with ravishing delight.

And such (in all respects superlatively such) an object is God: he infinitely beyond all other things deserveth our affection, as most perfectly amiable and desirable, as having obliged us by innumerable and inestimable benefits, all the good that we have ever enjoyed, or that we can ever expect, being derived from his pure bounty; all things in the world, in competition with him, being pitifully mean, ugly, and loathsome; all things, without him, being vain, unprofitable, and hurtful to us; so that the Psalmist

Ps. lxxxix. 6. might well say, *Who in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty*

Ps. lxxiii. 25. *can be likened unto the Lord? Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I can desire beside thee.* He is the most proper object of our love; for we chiefly were framed,

and it is the *prime law* of our nature, to love him ; SERM. our soul from original instinct vergeth toward him XLIII. as its centre, and can have no rest till it be fixed on Matt. xxii. him ; he alone can satisfy the vast capacity of our ^{38.} minds, and fill our boundless desires.

He, of all lovely things, most certainly and easily may be attained ; for whereas commonly men are crossed in their affection, and their love is imbibited from their affecting things imaginary, which they cannot reach, or coy things, which disdain and reject their affection ; it is concerning God quite otherwise : for,

He is most ready to impart himself, and *will not* John vi. 37. *reject any that cometh unto him* ; he most earnestly Ps. lxx. 4. ² Cor. v. desireth and wooeth our love ; he is not only most ^{20.} John xiv. willing to correspond in affection, but doth prevent ^{21, 23.} Apoc. iii. us therein, for *we love him*, saith the apostle, *be-* ^{20.} ¹ John iv. *cause he first loved us.* ^{19.}

He doth cherish and encourage our love by sweetest influences and most comfortable embraces, by kindest expressions of favour, by most beneficial returns, ordering that *all things shall work together* Rom. viii. *for good to those who love him* : and whereas all ^{28.} Cor. ii. 9. other objects do in the enjoyment much fail our expectation, he doth ever far exceed it.

Wherefore, in all affectionate motions of our hearts toward God, in desiring him, or seeking his favour and friendship ; in embracing him, or setting our esteem, our good-will, our confidence on him ; in enjoying him by devotional meditations and addresses to him ; in a reflexive sense of our interest and propriety in him ; in that mysterious union of spirit, ^{1 Cor. vi. 17.} hereby we do closely adhere to him, and are, as it ^{Acts xi. 23.} Deut. x. 10.

SERM. were, inserted in him ; in a hearty complacence in
XLIII. his benignity, a grateful resentment of his kindness,
John xv. 4, and a zealous desire of yielding some requital for it,
6. we cannot but feel very pleasant transports, assuring
Ps. v. 12. to us the truth of that saying in the Psalm, *They
that love thy name shall be joyful in thee* ; and dis-
Ps. xxxvi. posing us to cry out with the Psalmist, *How excel-
7.
Ps. lxiii. lent is thy lovingkindness, O Lord ! Because thy
3. lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall
praise thee.*

Indeed that celestial flame (kindled in our hearts by the spirit of love) cannot be void of warmth ; we cannot fix our eyes upon infinite beauty, we cannot taste infinite sweetness, we cannot cleave to infinite felicity, without we should also perpetually rejoice in the first daughter of love to God, charity toward men ; the which in complexion and cheerful disposition doth most resemble its mother : for it doth rid all those gloomy, keen, turbulent imaginations and passions, which cloud our mind, which fret our heart, which discompose the frame of our soul, (from burning anger, from storming contention, from gnawing envy, from rankling spite, from racking suspicion, from distracting ambition and avarice.) It consequently doth settle our mind in an even temper, in a sedate humour, in an harmonious order, in that pleasant state of tranquillity, which naturally doth result from the voidance of irregular passions.

And who can enumerate or express the pleasures which do await on every kind, on each act of charity ?

How triumphant a joy is there in anywise doing

good ! whereby we feed good humour, and gratify S E R M.
our best inclinations ; whereby we oblige our bre- XLIII.
thren, and endear ourselves to them ; whereby we
most resemble the divine goodness, and attract the
divine favour.

St. Paul telleth us, that *God loveth a cheerful* ² Cor. ix.
giver ; and he prescribeth, that *he who sheweth* ^{7.} Rom. xii.
mercy should do it ἐν ἡλαρότητι, *with merriness* ; and ^{8.}
in the Law it is commanded, *Thine heart shall not* ^{Deut. xv.}
grieve, when thou givest to thy poor brother : and ^{10.} Eccl. ^{Ecclus.}
who indeed can out of charity give alms or shew ^{xxxv. 10.}
mercy without cheerfulness ? seeing that he thereby
doth satisfy his own mind, and doth ease his own
bowels ; considering that in doing good to his neigh-
bour he receiveth far more good to himself ; that he
then doth put forth his stock to very great and
most certain advantage ; that he dischargeth an
office very acceptable to God, doth much oblige him,
and render him a debtor, doth engage him abun-
dantly to requite and reward that beneficence.

What satisfaction is there in forgiving offences !
whereby we discharge our souls from vexatious in-
mates, (black thoughts and rancorous animosities ;)
whereby we clear ourselves from the troubles at-
tending feuds and strifes ; whereby we imitate our
most gracious Creator, and transcribe the pattern of
our meek Redeemer ; whereby we render ourselves
capable of divine mercy, and acquire a good title to
the pardon of our own sins ; according to that di-
vine word, *If you forgive men their trespasses,* Matt. xi.
your heavenly Father will forgive you. ^{25. xxv.} ^{35.}

How unconfinedly and inexhaustibly vast is that
delight, which a charitable complacence in the good

SERM. of our neighbour (*a rejoicing with those that rejoice*) may afford ! a man thence engrossing all the good in the world, and appropriating to himself all the prosperous successes, all the pleasant entertainments, all the comfortable satisfactions of his neighbour. Even a charitable sympathy, or condolency, in the adversities of our neighbour, is not destitute of content ; for the soul is thereby melted into a gentle temper, susceptive of the best impressions ; we share in the comfort which we minister to others ; we are refreshed in that kindly submission to the good pleasure of God, in that lightsome contemplation of God's mercy, in those comfortable hopes of a happy issue, which we suggest to the afflicted ; we thence are disposed to a grateful sense of God's goodness, in preserving ourselves from those calamities, and in qualifying us to comfort our brethren ; we feel satisfaction in reflecting upon this very practice, and observing that we do act conformably to good-nature, to the dictates of reason, to the will of God, therein discharging a good conscience, and enjoying a portion of that *continual feast*.

I should, if the time would permit, further declare how we should find delight in the contemplation of all God's attributes, of his works, of his word ; in thankful resentment of all God's benefits ; in willing obedience to all God's laws ; how joy is a proper fruit growing on the practice of humility, of justice, of temperance, of devotion, of every virtue and grace : more particularly I should have evidenced how, from a patient submission to God's afflicting hand, from penitential contrition of heart for our sins, from a pious fear and solicitude in

working out our salvation, most sweet consolations SERM.
(so tempering those ingredients as to render their XLIII.
bitterness very savoury) may spring: but in re-
commending joy I would not produce grief; and
therefore shall not further annoy your patience.

END OF VOL. II.

